A History of Sufism in India

VOLUME ONE



Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi

This work seeks to study sufism as a psycho-historical phenomenon. The author finds it efficacious to combat social and politicalupheavals which are brought about by prolonged political revolutions, associated with autocratic oppression economic deprivation. It is divided into two volumes.

The present volume outlines the history of sufism before it was firmly established in India and then goes on to discuss the principal trends in sufi developments there from the thirteenth to the beginning of the sixteenth centuries. Chronologically it is concerned with sufi history from the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate to the beginning of the Mughal empire. Naturally it lays great emphasis on the Chishtiyya, Suhrawardiyya, Firdausiyya and Kubrawiyya orders, but the contributions made by qalandars and legendary and semi-legendary saints have also not been neglected. A detailed discussion of the interaction of medieval Hindu mystic traditions and sufism shows a unique polarity between the intolerant rigidity of the orthodox and the flexibility of the sufis in India.

Illustration on the cover: *Sufi Sama'* from the *Majalisu'l 'Ushshaq* by Sultan Husain written in 908/1502-03. Miniature from Bodleian MS., dated 959/1552, Ouseley Add. 24 ,f. 119 R.



A History of Sufism in India

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Vol. I

Early Sufism and its History in India to 1600 AD

by

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Dedicated
to the memory of the
Sufis
and
Saints

Contents

List of Abbreviations

AA	*Akhbaru'l-Akhyar* by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi.
Abu Nu'aim	*Hilyat al-Auliya'* by Abu Nu'aim.
A'in	*A'in-i Akbari* by Shaikh Abu'l-Fazl 'Allami.
Arberry	*Muslim saints and mystics* by A.J. Arberry.
EI (new edition)	*Encyclopaedia of Islam.*
Ethé	*Catalogue of the Persian manuscripts in the library of the India office.*
FF	*Fawai'du'l-Fu'ad* by Amir Hasan Sijzi.
Ibn al-'Imad	*Shazrat al-Zahb* by Ibn al-'Imad.
Ivanow	*Concise descriptive catalogue of the Persian manuscripts in the collection of the Asiatic society of Bengal* by W. Ivanow.
Ivanow (Curzon)	*Concise descriptive catalogue of the Persian manuscripts in the Curzon collection, Asiatic society of Bengal* by W. Ivanow.
Jamali	*Siyaru'l-'Arifin* by Jamali Kanbo Dihlawi.
Kalimat	*Kalimatu's-Sadiqin* by Muhammad Saqiq Kashmiri.
KM	*Khariu'l-Majalis* by Hamid Qalandar.
Macauliffe	*The Sikh religion* by M.A. Macauliffe.
Nicholson	English translation of the *Kashf al-Mahjub* by R.A. Nicholson.
NU	*Kitab Nafahat al-Uns* by 'Abdu'r Rahman Jami.
Qushairi	*Ar-Risalat al-Qushairiyya* by Abu'l-Qasim Qushairi.
SA	*Siyaru'l-Auliya'* by Amir Khwurd.
Storey	*Persian literature. A bio-bibliographical survey* by C.A. Storey.
Sulami	*Tabaqat al-Sufiyya* by al-Sulami.
Yafe'i	*Mir'at al-Janan* by al-Yafe'i.

List of Illustrations

List of Maps

Acknowledgements

THE author wishes to express his deep sense of gratitude to the librarians of the libraries and museums in the U.K., Europe, the middle east, and south-east Asia who gave him access to their valuable collections. Special thanks are due to the librarians who supplied microfilm copies of their manuscripts or published works.

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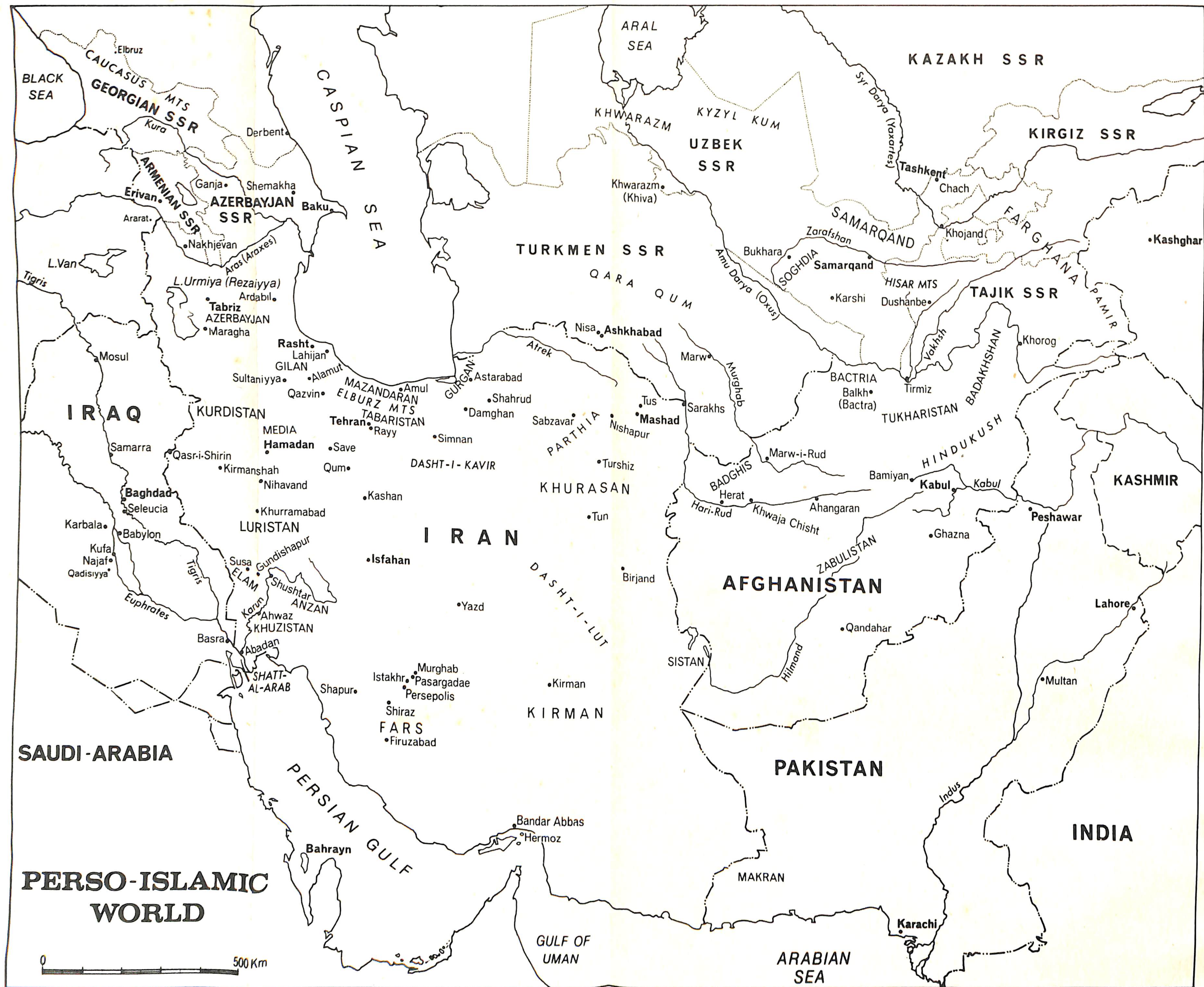
S.A.A. RIZVI

1 January, 1978.
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Note on Dates

MUSLIM dates are given according to the Hijra era or the event marking the Prophet Muhammad's emigration from Mecca to Medina. Although he arrived in Medina on 24 September 622, seventeen years later the Second Caliph 'Umar (634–44) instituted Muslim dating on the basis of the lunar months, beginning with Muharram. Thus the first Muharram was calculated to have fallen on 16 July 622. The adoption of the lunar calendar leads to the loss of one year every thirty-three years of the Roman calendar. Hence 1392 Hijra (H) or *Anno Hegirae* (AH) begins in 1972 AD and not in 2014. Of the two dates separated by an oblique in this book, the first is the Hijra (H) or *Anno Hegirae* (AH) and the second is AD. Where neither H. nor AD is mentioned alongwith dates, AD is invariably implied.

All equivalent dates have been taken from *Wustenfeld-Mahler' sche Vergleichungs-Tabellen.*


PERSO-ISLAMIC WORLD
0
500 Km
BLACK SEA
CAUCASUS MTS
Elbruz
GEORGIAN SSR
Kura
ARMENIAN SSR
Erivan
Ararat
Ganja
Shemakha
AZERBAYJAN SSR
Baku
Derbent
Nakhjevan
Aras (Araxes)
L.Van
Tigris
L.Urmiya (Rezaiyya)
Ardabil
Tabriz
AZERBAYJAN
Maragha
Mosul
Rasht
Lahijan
GILAN
Alamut
Sultaniyya
Qazvin
MAZANDARAN
ELBURZ MTS
Amul
TABARISTAN
Tehran
Rayy
GURGAN
Astarabad
Shahrud
Damghan
Simnan
IRAQ
KURDISTAN
MEDIA
Hamadan
Save
Qum
Samarra
Qasr-i-Shirin
Kirmanshah
Nihavand
Baghdad
Seleucia
Khurramabad
LURISTAN
Karbala
Babylon
Kufa
Najaf
Qadisiyya
Tigris
Euphrates
Susa
ELAM
Gundishapur
Shushtar
ANZAN
Karun
Ahwaz
KHUZISTAN
Basra
Abadan
SHATT-AL-ARAB
Kashan
DASHT-I-KAVIR
IRAN
Isfahan
Yazd
Shapur
Istakhr
Murghab
Pasargadae
Persepolis
Shiraz
FARS
Firuzabad
SAUDI-ARABIA
PERSIAN GULF
Bahrayn
Bandar Abbas
Hermoz
GULF OF UMAN
CASPIAN SEA
ARAL SEA
KHWARAZM
KYZYL KUM
UZBEK SSR
Khwarazm
(Khiva)
KAZAKH SSR
Syr Darya (Yaxartes)
Tashkent
Chach
KIRGIZ SSR
SAMARQAND
Khojand
FARGHANA
Zarafshan
Bukhara
SOGHDIA
Samarqand
HISAR MTS
Karshi
Dushanbe
TAJIK SSR
PAMIR
Kashghar
TURKMEN SSR
QARA QUM
Amu Darya (Oxus)
Nisa
Ashkhabad
Atrek
Marw
Murghab
Vakhsh
Khorog
BADAKHSHAN
BACTRIA
Balkh
(Bactra)
Tirmiz
TUKHARISTAN
Tus
Mashad
Sarakhs
Sabzavar
PARTHIA
Nishapur
Turshiz
KHURASAN
Tun
Marw-i-Rud
BADGHIS
Herat
Hari-Rud
Khwaja Chisht
Ahangaran
HINDUKUSH
Bamiyan
Kabul
Kabul
KASHMIR
Peshawar
Ghazna
ZABULISTAN
DASHT-I-LUT
Birjand
AFGHANISTAN
Qandahar
Lahore
SISTAN
Hilmand
Multan
Kirman
KIRMAN
PAKISTAN
Indus
INDIA
MAKRAN
Karachi
ARABIAN SEA

Introduction

The terms, sufi, *Wali-Allah* (protégé of God), dervish and *faqir,* are applied to Muslim spiritualists who attempt to achieve a development of their intuitive faculties through ascetic exercises, contemplation, renunciation and self-denial. There is no doubt that sufism or *Tasawwuf* conjures up images of such institutions and customs as saint cults, fascination with the occult, thaumaturgic and orgiastic practices, a mysterious world of visions and miracles, erotic poems and lascivious dancing. However, a significant section of sufis managed to help their followers to stabilize their emotions and to inculcate an understanding among different groups within the Muslim community.

By the twelfth century sufism had become a universal aspect of Islamic social life whose influence had spread to all Muslims. There were also an important number of sufis who, transcending religious and communal distinctions, promoted the interests of humanity at large. On the whole, sufism gave meaning and mission to the religious feelings and beliefs of a wide cross-section of society, both in India and in many parts of the Islamic world.

The present work seeks to study sufism as a psycho-historical phenomenon, the author seeing it as a potential force to meet social and political challenges produced by protracted political upheavals, associated with autocratic oppression and economic deprivation. It is divided into two volumes.

The first volume outlines the history of sufism before it was firmly established in India and then goes on to discuss the principal trends in sufi developments there from the thirteenth to the beginning of the sixteenth century. Chronologically it is concerned with sufi history from the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate to the beginning of the Mughal empire. Naturally it lays great emphasis on the Chishtiyya, Suhrawardiyya, Firdausiyya and Kubrawiyya orders, but the contributions made by qalandars and legendary and semi-legendary saints have not been neglected. A detailed discussion of the interaction of medieval Hindu mystic traditions and sufism shows a unique polarity between the intolerant rigidity of the orthodox and the flexibility of the sufis in India.

The fifteenth century also saw the introduction to India of the Shattari

and the Qadiri orders. These orders, along with the Naqshbandis and Chishtis, will be discussed in the second volume. This will also outline the impact of Indian sufis on the contemporary Islamic world, concluding with the influence of modernism on sufism in India.

Mainly concentrating on the development of Indian sufi orders and their internal conflicts and external threats, the two volumes deal with only the most important personalities of each order, their basic teachings and their contributions to religious, mystical, social, economic and political thought. They are not intended to be a directory of Indian sufis.

A History of Sufism in India, Vols. I and II, have been based mainly on Arabic and Persian sources, but they have also drawn on sufi works in the main regional Indian languages. Research scholars of this century, particularly during the period after the Second World War, have brought to light a large number of original sources on Islamic religion, philosophy, mysticism and sociology. Some of these have been published, others await publication. A few have been translated into English and European languages. Microfilm facilities have made even remote libraries accessible to scholars throughout the world. Such extensive collections as those of Sir Salar Jang of Hyderabad, Nauwab Habibu'r-Rahman Khan Shirwani of Habibganj, Aligarh, and of Professor Hafiz Mahmud Shirani in Lahore, have now been deposited in various libraries and museums and can therefore be researched by scholars. However many works, especially those in Persian and Arabic published last century, are still in private collections and remain beyond the reach of scholars. The present work and its second volume use material available in public libraries in the United Kingdom, Europe, the Middle East, South Asia and South-East Asia. This has been collected and analyzed over a period of twenty years and the present volume committed to paper only during 1973–74.

In order to maintain uniformity, as far as possible, references have been made to manuscripts and books available in public libraries. Thus many works published in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and available only to a fortunate few have been by-passed in favour of their manuscript copies to be found in libraries available to all. Printed material from such libraries as that of the India Office, London, has been rapidly disappearing and it has therefore been considered prudent to refer to manuscript material which has been more carefully preserved. Moreover, the manuscripts used as source material for this work are older and more reliable than the nineteenth and early twentieth century publications, some of which were neither carefully edited nor accurately printed. A large number of these publications even fail to mention manuscripts from which the editions were prepared.

The material used for this work can be divided into the following categories:

1. Treatises in prose and verse written by leading sufis who are dis-

cussed in this book.
2. Letters written by leading sufis.
3. Sufi discourses known as *malfuzat*.
4. Doctrinal works based on the above three categories.
5. Sufi biographical dictionaries.
6. Histories; and the biographies of nobles and poets.
7. Medieval geographies and accounts written by travellers, sailors and pilgrims.

In the first chapter of this volume we have discussed the evolution of sufi literature. In subsequent chapters, mystic literature written by Indian sufis has also been described. Here we give an analysis of the Persian sufi *malfuzat* and the biographical dictionaries which are principal sources for this work.

The discourses delivered by a leading sufi to a select gathering of sufi disciples and visitors gave rise to a distinctive genre of Persian literature. This was known as *malfuzat* (conversations or discourses) which also contained didactic poetry, anecdotes and apophthegms.

There were two classes of compilations of authentic discourses. Firstly there were discourses which were collected by a descendant or disciple of the sufi long after his death and which were generally divided into such sections as a brief biographical sketch, main teachings, miracles and an account of the type of contemplation and ascetic exercises undertaken by the Shaikh. Such works were based on the anecdotes which members of the sufi's family and his disciples remembered and sometimes letters exchanged with important personalities would also be incorporated. The flavour of this type of literature differed little from that of Christian hagiological works.

The most dependable are the *malfuzat* of the second category which consisted of discourses recorded soon after they were delivered by a *pir*, and which were also dated. At times sufi masters revised the drafts themselves and confirmed the accuracy, or otherwise, of these statements.

The earliest known book in the first category is the *Halat wa Sukhanan-i Shaikh Abu Sa'id bin Abu'l Khair*[1] of Mayhana (Mehna or Meana). It was the work of Jamalu'd-Din Abu Ruh, a great-grandson of Shaikh Abu Sa'id. The author's cousin, Muhammad bin Munawwar bin Abi (Abu) Sa'id bin Abi Tahir bin Abi Sa'id, wrote a longer work incorporating a large part of his predecessor's work, calling it *Asraru't-Tawhid Fi Maqamat-i Shaikh Abi Sa'id*. It was started in 548/1153–54, but not until around 570/1174–75 was it completed and dedicated by its author to the Ghurid Sultan Ghiyasu'd-Din (1163–1203). The work is divided into three sections. The first (pp. 3–42) gives an account of the early life of Shaikh Abu Sa'id and the second section deals with the Shaikh as a

[1]Details of editions and manuscripts may be seen in the Bibliography.

middle-aged man. This part is further sub-divided into three chapters: the first and largest chapter (pp. 45–204) deals with the miracles of Shaikh Abu Sa'id; the second chapter (pp. 207–94) discusses anecdotes of other sufis related by the Shaikh; and the third chapter (pp. 295–344) contains miscellaneous teachings of the Shaikh. The third section deals with the old age and death of the Shaikh. This is also sub-divided into three chapters: the first (pp. 347–53) contains the Shaikh's last testament; the second (pp. 354–60) is an account of his death and the third (pp. 361–92) describes his miracles.

The *Asraru't-Tawhid* was designed to glorify the mystical achievements of Shaikh Abu Sa'id and presents him as a supernatural being. Nevertheless, glimpses of the economic and social life of the Shaikh which tend to emerge accidentally are both informative and entertaining.

To cater for the spiritual curiosity of gullible admirers, the spurious *malfuzat* of the great Indian Chishtis were embroidered by anonymous authors who were bereft of either a feeling for history or a first-hand knowledge of the lives of their heroes. Some of these works are:

1. The *Anisu'l-Arwah*, the alleged discourses of Shaikh 'Usman Harwani; the authorship attributed to Shaikh Mu'inu'd-Din Sijzi.
2. The *Dalilu'l-'Arifin*, the alleged discourses of Shaikh Mu'inu'd-Din; the authorship attributed to Shaikh Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki.
3. The *Fawa'idu's-Salikin*, the alleged discourses of Shaikh Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki; the authorship attributed to Shaikh Faridu'd-Din.
4. The *Asraru'l-Auliya'*, the alleged discourses of Shaikh Faridu'd-Din; the authorship attributed to his son-in-law, Maulana Badr Ishaq.
5. The *Rahatu'l-Qulub*, the alleged discourses of Shaikh Faridu'd-Din; the authorship attributed to Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya'.
6. The *Afzalu'l-Fawa'id*, the alleged discourses of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya'; the authorship attributed to Amir Khusraw.
7. The *Miftahu'l-'Ashiqin*, the alleged conversations of Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Chiragh-i Dihli; the authorship attributed to Muhibbu'llah.[1]

In the fourteenth century this literature greatly increased, mainly spurred on by a need for information about the early Chishti saints down to the period of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya'. On 15 Muharram 710/20 September 1301 a visitor to the Shaikh referred to a book written by him. The latter, however, denied having written anything at all.[2] His disciple, Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Chiragh-i Dihli, also categorically refuted that any of his predecessors had written sufi texts. He added that the *malfuzat* of Shaikh Qutbu'd-Din and Shaikh 'Usman Harwani were not available

[1]For a detailed discussion on these books see M. Habib, 'Chishti mystic records of the Sultanate period,' *Medieval India quarterly*, Aligarh, I, October, 1950, no. 2, pp. 1–42.

[2]Amir Hasan Sijzi, *Fawa'idu'l-Fu'ad*, Bulandshahr, 1272/1855–56, p. 52.

while Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' was alive or else he would have mentioned them.[1] Nizami has ventured the hypothesis that the fabricated works tried to fill a vacuum in the Chishti *silsila* caused by the transfer of the capital by Muhammad bin Tughluq from Dehli to Daulatabad in the Deccan.[2]

The view is untenable for unauthentic sufi literature had already begun to appear by the time of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya', as the reference to his alleged work would tend to indicate; it also shows the daring of the authors who ascribed books to saints who were still living.

This type of pious forgery was not peculiar to sufis, the *Qussas* or story tellers during the first and second centuries of Islam and the forgers of the *Hadis* of the Prophet Muhammad were many. The same is true of works ascribed to both earlier and later sufis. A pressing popular demand for details of teachings and miracles of sufis, especially those of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' and his predecessors, as described by Barani, were the main incentives for the output of fabricated *malfuzat.*[3]

Although the historical sense and form of teaching ascribed to sufi leaders depicted in the unauthentic *malfuzat* are quite incredible, they nevertheless catered to the insatiable popular taste for details of the miracles of mystics, as well as those of yogis and qalandars. They also provided for the proselytizing militancy of many Muslims whose concerns were not really with sufism, but in the assertion of their own superiority in the field of religion.

The distorted sufi image produced by these phony *malfuzat* seems to have prompted Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' to urge his disciple and gifted scholar, Amir Hasan Sijzi, to complete his project of writing a *malfuzat*. Early in 1308, Amir Hasan Sijzi decided to write the discourses of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' in diary form. On 8 Shawwal 708/18 March 1309, after the Shaikh again referred to the great benefits to be gained from the discourses, maxims and anecdotes of sufis, Amir Hasan mentioned that his *pir* had stressed this point so many times, that it had prompted him to compile a book of the Shaikh's conversations. Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din answered that he also had tried to write down what he had heard from Shaikh Faridu'd-Din (Baba Farid), but that he, too, had always been by what he said that he was unable to write a word.[4] Amir Hasan then produced a draft he had prepared of an account of the Shaikh's discourses over a period of thirteen months. After reading the draft, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din praised them and filled in a few remaining gaps.

The book of the discourses of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' only included an account of the fifteen years up to 722/1322–23. It was known as the *Fawa'idu'l-Fu'ad*. Amir Hasan's official duties often kept him

[1] Maulana Hamid Qalandar, *Khairu'l-Majalis*, ed. K.A. Nizami, Aligarh, 1959, p. 52.

[2] 'Chishti mystic records of the Sultanate period, *Medieval India quarterly*, I, no. 2, p. 39.

[3] Ziya'u'd-Din Barani, *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, Calcutta, 1860-62, p. 346.

[4] *FF*, pp. 34-5.

outside Delhi but during a stay in the capital, he would attend the Shaikh's assembly once a week. Not every week's discourses, however, are recorded; those from the years such as 709–10/1309–10, 717–18/1317–18 and 721–22/1321–22 are only briefly mentioned; the most widely covered are the years 708–09/1308–09.

Usually the discourses were on an *ad hoc* basis. They resulted from questions by those gathered around the Shaikh on religious, economic or social issues. The sermons included references to the Qur'an, *Hadis*, anecdotes and the sayings of previous sufis and were intended to fulfill the religious and ethical needs and emotions of the audience, and were not necessarily founded on authentic sources. Never in debate form, the discourses failed to include an analysis of opposing views and were believed to bear the stamp of infallibility. This tended to produce a rigidity in the thinking of the devotees of the great Shaikh and to prevent the emergence of a detached rationality.

The aphorisms of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din on economic, social and political topics also carried great weight and tended to supplement existing literature although their views did not necessarily reverse the data provided by historians. For example, the views of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' about Nur Turk's leadership in the attempted overthrow of the government of Raziyya are not necessarily correct.[1] Nevertheless the conversations were written down immediately they had taken place or shortly afterwards, and were therefore a record of the spontaneous reaction of the Shaikh and an invaluable analysis of the religious, social, ethical and economic values of his period.

Informative and interesting, rather than methodical, the collection of the sayings of Shaikh Hamidu'd-Din Nagauri and of his grandson Faridu'd-Din Mahmud was called the *Sururu's Sudur* and was written by the long-lived grandson of Shaikh Hamidu'd-Din Nagauri. This work throws considerable light on Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq's intense devotion to the descendants of Shaikh Hamidu'd-Din Nagauri. What emerges from the book is the image of a considerate and compassionate ruler, in contrast to the capricious and cruel character portrayed by Barani and Ibn Battuta.

The *Khairu'l-Majalis* by Hamid Qalandar was a significant work containing discourses by Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din. Like the *Fawaidu'l-Fu'ad*, its accounts are not dated. It is even more voluminous than the latter, consisting of one hundred chapters and an appendix. Shaikh Hamid first came into contact with Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din (d. 1356) in 754/1353–54 and was encouraged by him to write an account of the latter's discourses. Earlier, a section of *malfuzat* written by the Shaikh's nephew had so disappointed the Shaikh that he had rejected the draft. Although he had

[1] *FF*, pp. 204, 212. For further discussions on this point *see* S.A.A. Rizvi, *Religious and intellectual history of the Muslims in Akbar's reign*, Delhi, 1975, p. 9.

sufficient confidence in Hamid, the work was regularly supervised. The Shaikh survived for only a few years after the commencement of the book and therefore his many memories of these earlier years evoked in him traditional feelings of nostalgia. To Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din, the days of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' became the golden era in the history of the Muslims in India; he believed that both the great saint and Sultan 'Ala'u'd-Din Khalji had achieved the highest possible standards in religion and statecraft respectively. The confusion and consternation produced by Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq's religious policies among a section of Delhi's religious élite was replaced by the orthodoxy of Sultan Firuz, but neither the reversal of the former policies, nor the new liberal grants to khanqahs satisfied the aged Nasiru'd-Din Chiragh.

Although one can lament the lack of dates in the *Khairu'l-Majalis*, its discourses, a compendium of the ethics of Chishtis, give a lively picture of the changing pattern of their attitude towards social and economic dilemmas. The *Fawaidu'l-Fu'ad* and the *Khairu'l-Majalis* are the best examples of the art of *malfuzat* writing.

Following a precedent established by the disciples of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' and Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din, the compiling of *malfuzat* became an important feature of khanqah life. Among those books which have survived are the *Ahsanu'l-Aqwal*, discourses of Shaikh Burhanu'd-Din Gharib and the *Jawami'u'l-Kilam*, those of Saiyid Muhammad Gisu Daraz. The *malfuzat* of Shaikh Husamu'd-Din Manikpuri, the *Rafiqu'l 'Arifin*, have also been discovered and give interesting insights into Chishti centres in small towns.

The *malfuzat* of Saiyid Muhammad Ashraf Jahangir Simnani of Kichaucha written by his disciple Nizamu'd-Din Yamani, is a lengthy work. It features an introduction and sixty chapters, called *Latifas* (Elegant Sayings). Besides giving a brief account of the Saiyid's travels, it discusses all the traditional topics of interest to sufis and is therefore a significant encyclopaedia of their ideas. It also manages to combine, most skilfully, Irani elements of sufism with their counterparts in India.

Malfuzat-i Ashrafi, by Nizam Hajji, is largely based on the *Lata'if-i Ashrafi*, but its author also adds some new material on sufism.

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus Gangohi wrote the *malfuzat* of Shaikh Ahmad 'Abdu'l-Haqq of Rudauli and Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din, the son of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus Gangohi, was the author of his father's *malfuzat*.

These works not only give a new dimension to the teachings of leading sufis but make useful additions to our knowledge of the contemporary scene and the types of lives experienced by the common people. As well as giving glimpses into the daily routine of a khanqah, they take us down to the lower echelons of Muslim society, and show that the passivity and inertia of its members was matched only by their firm faith in Allah.

Although Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis refers to the *malfuzat* of Shaikh Sadru'd-Din and Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din neither has survived.

However short extracts from these works which were reproduced in the *Akhbaru'l-Akhyar* are highly informative.

Largely modelled on the pattern of the *Fawa'idu'l-Fu'ad*, though lacking the mystical sensitivity of the ideas expressed by Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya', is the collection of utterances of the celebrated Suhrawardi saint, Saiyid Abu 'Abdu'llah Jalalu'd-Din Husain bin Ahmad Bukhari, better known as the Makhdum Jahaniyan. The account dates from Sunday 8 Rabi' II 781/24 July 1379 and ends on Tuesday 17 Muharram 782/23 April 1380, during the time of Shaikh's visit to Delhi. It was the work of his disciple Abu 'Abdu'llah 'Ala'u'd-Din 'Ali bin Sa'd bin Ashraf bin 'Ali al-Quraishi al-Husaini. The Makhdum Jahaniyan encouraged the author in his undertaking and clarified particular points he could not understand. The work was called the *Khulasatu'l-Alfaz Jami'u'l-'Ulum*. Another of the Makhdum Jahaniyan's disciples, Makhdumzada 'Abdu'llah, compiled a summary of discourses delivered by the great saint on different occasions, but these lack the pithiness of those featured in the *Khulasatu'l-Alfaz*. The work is entitled the *Siraju'l-Hidaya*. The *Khazinat al-Fawa'id al Jalalaliyya*, composed by Ahmad bin Ya'qub in 752/1351 and the *Khazinah-i Jalali* by Abu'l Fazl bin Ziya' are compendiums of the teachings of the Makhdum Jahaniyan which, however, lack the personal touches contained in *malfuzat*.

The scholars of the Firdausiyya order also collected the discourses of their *pirs*. Of the *malfuzats* from this order, the most notable is the *Ma'danu'l-Ma'ani*. This book contains the discourses of Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din Ahmad bin Yahya Munyari or Maneri, a profound scholar and the author of about fifteen books. His *malfuzat* were collected by a disciple called Zain Badr 'Arabi. The work contains discourses delivered by the Shaikh between 15 Sha'ban 749/8 November 1348 and the end of Shawwal 751/December 1350. Like the *Fawa'idu'l-Fu'ad*, the sermons in the *Ma'danu'l-Ma'ani* are related with deep mystical insight and the work is colourful yet reverential in style.

Another collection of Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din's discourses produced in 762/1360–61 is entitled *Malfuz-i Safar*. It includes an illuminating reference to the second expedition of Sultan Firuz to Bengal. Travelling from Jaunpur towards Orissa, via Bihar, the Sultan and his army aroused panic and terror among the masses in Bihar and the Shaikh advised them to remain in their houses for protection. There is also a reference to a Bengali Sultan named Ikhtiyaru'd-Din Ghazi, who issued his own coins between 750/1349–50 and 753/1352–53 but is otherwise unknown.

Salah Mukhlis Dawud Khani, another disciple of Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din, spent some time in arranging in book form the discourses of his *pir*. These included those given between 21 Sha'ban 774/15 February 1373 and 1 Muharram 775/23 June 1373. Another collection of the Shaikh's discourses, the *Ganj-i La Yafna* was also compiled. Those by a later Firdausiyya saint from Bihar, Shaikh Husain Mu'izz Balkhi, were also

collected under a similar title, the *Ganj-i La Yakhfa*.

The earliest known biographical dictionary of sufis written in India is the *Siyaru'l-Auliya' fi Muhabbat al-Haqq jalla wa'-ala'*, simply known as the *Siyaru'l-Auliya'*, which was the work of Saiyid Muhammad bin Mubarak bin Muhammad 'Alwi Kirmani. Known as Amir or Mir Khwurd, the Saiyid was the grandson of Saiyid Muhammad bin Mahmud Kirmani, a merchant who traded between Kirman in Iran and Lahore. During business trips to Lahore via Ajodhan, he would call on Shaikh Faridu'd-Din Ganj-i Shakar, who was known as Baba Farid, and on one occasion became his disciple. Saiyid Ahmad Kirmani, an uncle of Saiyid Muhammad bin Mahmud, an officer in the Multan mint, married his daughter to Saiyid Muhammad. Although his father-in-law pressed him to remain in Multan, the Saiyid finally settled in Ajodhan and for about eighteen years loyally served his *pir*. After Baba Farid's death, the Shaikh and his sons migrated to Delhi and became great companions of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya'.

Saiyid Muhammad died in 711/1311–12. His eldest son, the father of Amir Khwurd, was also a disciple of Baba Farid and seems to have obtained initiation from Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din Maudud, the son of Khwaja Abu Yusuf of Chisht. His devotion to Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' was also great.

Amir Khwurd obtained a high degree of scholastic education, however, the serenity of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya's *jama'at-khana* had filled him with a fervent love for mysticism. Despite Amir Khwurd's youth, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' made him his disciple. His association with such literary giants as Amir Khusraw, Amir Hasan, Fakhru'd-Din Zarradi and Ziya'u'd-Din Barani helped to develop his own intellectual and mystical sensitivities.

In 1327 Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq, for reasons which will be explained at greater length, forced the 'ulama' and sufis to migrate to Daulatabad. Amir Khwurd was a reluctant participant in this mass exodus of the élite. After a few years, along with others, he was allowed to return but for him it came too late; the life of an exile had filled him with deep bitterness and disappointment. Previously he had assiduously avoided becoming a disciple of Delhi's great Shaikh, Nasiru'd-Din, but after his return he did so, in an attempt to find some form of spiritual comfort at the *jama'at-khana*, of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya's successor.

Still bearing the marks of his exile, Amir Khwurd decided to unburden his personal frustrations by writing biographies of the Chishti saints. He wrote a detailed biography of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya', with reference to his many disciples and to his teachings. His material was based on first-hand information and he had access to the papers of the great Shaikh. This task was performed by Amir Khwurd with tremendous enthusiasm and devotion. Carefully he tried to avoid details of miracles and super-

natural feats, much in demand at the time, but could not restrain himself from recording that each night during the Shaikh's lifetime a flying camel had stopped at the window to take Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' to the Ka'ba and bring him back in time for early breakfast. Regarding the conflicts between the Delhi saints and Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq, naturally Amir Khwurd tended to side with the former, as he himself was personally involved in the struggle. However, reading between the lines it is not difficult to assess that by that time sufis in Delhi had tended to depart from the traditions established by the early Chishtis and had become used to the way of life in the capital and were therefore less than keen to depart to a more hostile and alien environment in the Deccan.

Despite Amir Khwurd's subjective judgments, the work presents an overall picture of the private and public lives of sufis during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The inner feelings of the sufis are bared. Their lives both in the *jama'at-khanas* and their own houses are exposed and both their friends and enemies are introduced. From the pages can be gleaned ideas about the many groups in Delhi society: members of the court, the princes, the governing classes, the 'ulama', merchants, agriculturalists, artisans and the common Muslims. It shows that the lives of Muslims in that affluent eastern capital, continually replenished by the proceeds from booty and plunder, were burdened by serious problems. Accommodation was one of the gravest difficulties encountered by the average citizen in Delhi and employment in the metropolis was exceedingly hard to find. The *Siyaru'l-Auliya'*, the most authentic record of about half a century of life in Delhi, stresses the social and economic tensions caused by many divergent influences and through religious conflicts.

The *Khulasatu'l-Manaqib* by Ja'far Badakhshi, a disciple of Mir Saiyid 'Ali Hamadani, is an interesting collection of stories said to have been related by the author's *pir*, and also incorporates anecdotes and legends about, and verses composed by, other Irani sufis. From these stories, one can gather that the Mir held an exaggerated idea of his own importance. The work does not refer to the Mir's activities in Kashmir, but it nevertheless generally manages to portray his personality most effectively. The *Khulasatu'l-Manaqib* was started in 787/1385, however, the date of its completion is unknown.

In 831/1427-28, Muhammad 'Ali Samani wrote a biography, the *Siyar-i Muhammadi* of Saiyid Muhammad bin Yusuf Husaini, who was much better known by his nick-name, Gisu Daraz. But the work, to some extent, was a failure because of its unending praise of its subject and the sequence of events which proves confusing. The *Mahbubiyya* by Najmu'd-Din Yusuf bin Ruknu'd-Din Muhammad Nia'mu'llah Gardezi covers various stories in the life of the Makhdum Jahaniyan, Saiyid Jalal Bukhari, and the latter's son, grandson and great-grandson. The *Nafahatu'l-Uns min Hazaratu'l-Quds* by Shaikh Nuru'd-Din 'Abdu'r-

Rahman Jami, completed in 883/1478–79, is an enlarged version of Shaikh 'Abdu'llah Ansari's *Tabaqat al-Sufiyya*. The biographies of sufis who flourished in Iran between the eleventh and fifteenth centuries based on research done by Jami are indispensable for the study of the sufis of three centuries preceding the author's own life. It also briefly discusses some Indian sufis, however, Jami's sources here were not very reliable. The *Rashahat-i 'Ainu'l Hayat* of Fakhru'd-Din Husain 'Ali bin al-Husain al-Wa'iz Kashifi, written in 909/1503–04, is valuable for the information it gives on the Naqshbandis and for its clarifying of some minor points relating to the period covered in the present volume.

The most important work for this study, however, is the *Siyaru'l-'Arifin* of Hamid bin Fazlu'llah. Also known as Dervish Jamali Kambo Dihlawi, the author's full biography is given in Chapter Five. The work was written between 937/1530 and 942/1536 and includes a full account of the leading Chishti and Suhrawardi saints of the period. Although a Suhrawardi, Hamid bin Fazlu'llah did not hesitate to draw on material from Chishti *malfuzat* in his account of Suhrawardi saints. This appears to be the first available history of the Suhrawardi order compiled in this way. The most invaluable portions of the *Siyaru'l-Arifin* are those which give details about Indian sufis which were collected from centres of sufism outside the sub-continent in Syria, Iraq, Iran and Central Asia. Although these stories were related by the author's hosts in these places, and were not necessarily accurate, they do reflect the image of Indian sufis abroad at that time.

Before his death in 994/1586, Baba Dawud Khaki Kashmiri Suhrawardi completed a short biography, entitled *Wirdu'l-Muridin*, written in metre, of his *pir*, Shaikh Hamza Kashmiri (d. 1576). The work in the main is highly eulogistic and fails to give many biographical details.

The most dependable and scholarly collection of biographies of Indian sufis is the *Akhbaru'l-Akhyar fi Asraru'l-Abrar*. Its author, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq bin Saifu'd-Din al-Turk al-Dihlawi, was born in January-February 1551 and died in 1642–43. His long life was spent in an unremitting pursuit of knowledge, and his studies took place both in India and Hejaz. Being trained as a scholar of *Hadis*, he was famous as a *muhaddis*. His close male ancestors and relatives were also scholars and mystics. His library was extensive and included all the *malfuzat* and sufi works written in India, as well as a large number of works written outside India. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq was a masterly critic of *Hadis* and was therefore well-equipped to investigate the authenticity and historical value of religious traditions. His skill can be clearly seen in his *Akhbaru'l-Akhyar fi Asraru'l-Abrar* which incorporated 225 biographies of Indian sufis. The book began with a note on Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani and ended with an account of the author's own ancestry and some details of his life. Using as model the *Tabaqat* literature of the biographies of narrators and transmitters of the *Ahadis* (traditions of the Prophet Muhammad)

and of the sufi *Tabaqat* literature, discussed in Chapter One, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq classified the biographies into three sections (*tabaqas*) which covered the following sufis:

1. Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Sijzi, his contemporaries and disciples.
2. Shaikh Faridu'd-Din Ganj-i Shakar and his followers and disciples.
3. Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Mahmud Chiragh-i Dihli and sufis from his time to that of the author's.

Such a classification helped Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq to place the biographies of sufis whose dates were questionable into a reasonable historical sequence, thus avoiding the acceptance of dates based on unauthentic traditions. He scrupulously excluded all references to supernatural and miraculous elements, highlighting instead the mystical and spiritual ideas, ethical behaviour and psychological perceptions of the great sufis, using authentic *malfuzat* and the letters and writings of the sufis themselves. Although a large number of *malfuzats* have now been discovered, a considerable body of such literature still remains in obscurity and our best source of information for biographies still remains the *Akhbaru'l-Akhyar*. Although some biographies are extremely brief, a large number present a detailed outline of the lives and spiritual achievements of many sufis. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq's work was written before 996/1588 but was later revised in 999/1590–91. The work was welcomed by the Shaikh's contemporaries and was of great use to later scholars.

Shaikh Abu'l-Fazl 'Allami (1551–1602) the great historian of Akbar's reign also collected a great deal of sufi biographical literature and *malfuzat* with the intention of writing a work like that of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq. He finally managed only to give short biographies at the end of the *A'in-i Akbari*. However, his nephew, 'Abdu's-Samad, used the material collected by his uncle to complete, in 1015/1606–07, the *Akhbaru'l-Asfiya'*, patterned on the *Akhbaru'l-Akhyar* of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq. Although the book adds some new information, it lacks the mystical and scholarly insights contained in Shaikh 'Abdu'l Haqq's work.

In 1045/1635 Baba Nasib Kashmiri (d. 1047/1637), a disciple of Baba Dawud Khaki, wrote a *Rishi Nama*. Contrary to the emphasis on ascetic withdrawal, previously seen in the teachings and lives of Rishi hermits, the work implies that by that period the Rishi order was filled with enthusiastic evangelists for Islam. Imbued with the orthodox Sunni spirit of Shaikh Hamza, the author is strongly hostile to Shi'is. Another *Rishi Nama* by Baha'u'd-Din Baha Mattu is based on Nasib's and was completed in 1248/1832. It adds little to our knowledge and abounds with endless legends and rhetoric.

During the seventeenth century a large number of sufi biographical dictionaries were compiled. The most important will now be mentioned.

Like the *Akhbaru'l Akhyar*, the *Gulzar-i Abrar* written by Muhammad

Ghausi bin Hasan bin Musa Shattari, was based on vast amounts of source material available at the time and contains the biographies of 575 sufis. The author was a friend of Abu'l-Fazl and Faizi. A resident of Mandu, Muhammad Ghausi was a Shattari, but his knowledge of other orders and their leading mystics was extensive. Analytical in his approach, he clearly understood the social and moral role of sufis in the context of his period and took great care to place his biographies in a proper historical sequence. The *Gulzar-i Abrar* was dedicated to the Emperor Jahangir.

The sober tone of these biographical dictionaries was discarded by 'Ali Asghar bin Shaikh Maudud bin Shaikh Muhammad Chishti of Fathpur. He used a eulogistic style in his *Jawahir-i Faridi* to glorify the spiritual achievements of Shaikh Faridu'd-Din Ganj-i Shakar and his descendants. They were the ancestors of Shaikh Salim Chishti whose prayers were said to have been responsible for the birth of Akbar's son, Prince Salim, later Emperor Jahangir. The author drew his material from the many legends surrounding Shaikh Faridu'd-Din Ganj-i Shakar and his spiritual descendants. Their myths related to the performance of supernatural feats such as flying through the air and to the conversion of huge numbers of Hindus, the latter being quite contrary to the Chishti mission, were also included. The work was completed in 1033/1623.

Similarly legendary and fantastic in the recounting of Chishti miracles, particularly of the Sabiriyya branch, is the *Saiyaru'l-Aqtab* of Ilah-diya which was completed in 1056/1646–47.

The *Zubdatu'l-Muqamat* by Muhammad Hashim compiled in 1037/1627–28 is a biographical dictionary of the Naqshbandis but also offers some interesting details of the Chishtis and other early sufis.

Muhammad Sadiq Kashmiri Hamadani who lived during the reigns of Jahangir and Shah Jahan wrote the biographies of 125 sufis who were all buried in Delhi, and called the book the *Kalimatu's-Sadiqin*. In this work the author has skilfully interwoven the lives of the Delhi saints against their historical background, thus giving his work an authoritative perspective. He also wrote a detailed biographical dictionary of Indian sufis called the *Tabaqat-i Shah-Jahani*.

The *Majma'ul-Auliya'* of Mir 'Ali Akbar Husaini Ardastani, which was dedicated to Shah Jahan, is a massive work incorporating the biographies of about 1,400 sufis, both Indian and non-Indian. Sultan Muhammad Dara Shukoh (born 1615, killed 1659), the eldest son of Shah Jahan wrote a number of sufic works of which the *Safinatu'l-Auliya'*, containing short biographical notes and completed on 27 Ramazan 1049/21 January 1640, is an interesting and carefully executed work. Dara Shikoh's sister, Jahan Ara Begum, the favourite daughter of Shah Jahan, was equally interested in sufism. Of her works the best is *Munisu'l-Arwah*, a biography of Shaikh Mu'inu'd-Din Chishti and his disciples, which was completed in 1049/1640.

Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman Chishti, a descendant of Shaikh Ahmad 'Abdu'l-Haqq of Rudauli, who succeeded to the leadership of the Chishti order in 1032/1622 was an interesting personality. A scholar of Sanskrit, he gave new explanations to the *Bhagavad-Gita* in the light of Islam, most notable is his work, the *Mir'atu'l Makhluqat*, which associated the Hindu cosmogony of *Yoga-Vashisht* philosophy with Muslim beliefs. He was keenly interested in the legends of qalandars and sufis. His *Mir'at-i Madari* and the *Mir'at-i Mas'udi* will be discussed in Chapter Five. Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman's monumental work was the *Mir'atu'l-Asrar*, which covered the biographies of sufis from the early days of Islam to the time of Husamu'd-Din Manikpuri (d. 853/1449). The book was started in 1045/1635 and not completed until 1065/1654. The Shaikh could not resist the temptation to record many miracles and legends, which by that time were an integral part of the beliefs associated with sufis. His lengthy work discusses in detail a large number of unknown sufis.

Equally interesting for the extensive information it contains of sufis between Shikohabad in Mainpuri (U.P.) and Jaunpur, is the *Chishtiyya-i Bahishtiya* or *Firdausiya-i Qudsiya* of Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Din Muhammad Chishti of Barnawa, (near Delhi). The author's knowledge of the music used in sufi *sama'* rituals enabled him to give useful details about different aspects of the development of music in northern India. The work seems to have been completed sometime around 1076/1665–66.

The *Asraru'l-Abrar* of Mishkati, completed in 1065/1654–55, contains biographical notes on Kashmiri sufis, both orthodox and Rishi. Although the author finds it difficult to by-pass the opportunity to emphasize the successful missionary activities of the Irani Kashmiri sufis, he also mentions the profound influence that Lalla, the prominent Shaivite yogini, had on Nuru'd-Din Rishi and also quotes some sayings of the Rishis.

Ghulam Mu'inu'd-Din 'Abdu'llah Khweshgi of Qasur, thirty miles south-east of Lahore, was a scholar of rare ability. His career spanned the reigns from Shah Jahan to Muhammad Shah (1719–48). Of his many works, the *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, written in 1094/1682–83 features a most important collection of biographies of Indian sufis. Although it is not analytical, Ghulam Mu'inu'd-Din's work is important in that it quotes at great length excerpts from the writings and letters of sufis and of their documents which are not to be found elsewhere.

In 1111/1699–1700, Muhammad Bulaq bin Muhammad Khalidi Dihlawi completed a detailed biography of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya', his disciples and their spiritual descendants. The work is largely based on the *Siyaru'l-Auliya'*. It is called *Matlubu't-Tabin*. The *Zikr-i Jami'-i Auliya'-i Dihli*, completed in 1140/1727–28 by Muhammad Habibu'llah bin Shaikh Jahan Akbarabadi, is modelled on the *Kalimatu's-Sadiqin* and gives an account of the Delhi sufis. The *Sawati'u'l-Anwar* of Muhammad Akram, completed by the author in 1142/1729, is a large collection of biographies of Chishti saints. The *Rauzatu'l-Auliya'* by

Mir Ghulam 'Ali Azad Bilgarami, written in 1161/1748, is an interesting biography of ten saints buried at Khuldabad.

A continuation of the *Siyaru'l-Auliya'*, known as the *Zikru'l-Asfiya fi Takmilat Siyaru'l-Auliya' dar Manqabat-i Shamsu'l-Huda*, was the work of Gul Muhammad Ma'rufi Karkhi Chishti Ahmadpuri, who died in 1827. It is a valuable record of the lives of seventeenth and eighteenth century Chishtis.

Biographical dictionaries written by nineteenth century sufis are numerous and have been mentioned in the Bibliography. It is worthwhile to mention here, however, that the *Khazinatu'l-Asfiya'*, completed in 1281/1864–65 by Mufti Muhammad Ghulam Sarwar of Lahore is the most widely read of these. Ghulam Sarwar was a prolific author and he himself published several books on the biographies, sayings and achievements of sufis, as well as a history of India which included a brief sketch of English history. The author had a vast library of books on sufism which, at the end of the nineteenth and in the early twentieth century, were dispensed amongst a large number of Panjabi book lovers and scholars. The *Khazinatu'l-Asfiya'* refers at length to many earlier sources, and its author believed these should all be considered of equal importance, even though many confused fact with fiction. Using unreliable sufi family trees, Ghulam Sarwar accepted every date given in these texts and composed verses of chronograms. The publication of this work synchronized with the impact of British liberalism in India, giving scholars an opportunity to glorify the mission of sufis and the impact of their miracles in the Islamization of the sub-continent.

Political chronicles refer to sufis only in connection with their political rôle in history or in short biographical notes either at the end of each reign or in the conclusion of the works themselves. Abu 'Umar Minhaju'd-Din 'Usman bin Siraju'd-Din Muhammad Juzjani, the author of the *Tabaqat-i Nasiri*, was an *'alim* and a qazi but he was also a friend of sufis. In his work he emphasized that it was the blessings of a dervish which enabled Sultan Shamsu'd-Din Iltutmish to succeed to the throne of Delhi.[1] 'Isami gave a different colour to this particular story. Some sufi biographical dictionaries included the name of the Sultan in their list of sufis. Some recent scholars have tried to prove that Iltutmish was a sufi.[2] However, Minhaj Siraj gave a vivid picture of the leadership of Nur Turk in his bid to overthrow Raziyya. Minhaj also gives a graphic account of a Turkish dervish named 'Ayyub, who became the favourite of Sultan Mu'izzu'd-Din Bahram Shah (1240–42). The dervish seized the opportunity in an attempt to seek revenge on Qazi Shamsu'd-Din, who had previously treated 'Ayyub badly. His attempts to have the Qazi trampled to death by elephants seem to have been thwarted by the

[1]Minhaj Siraj, *Tabaqat-i Nasiri*, Calcutta, 1863-64, pp. 167-68.

[2]K.A. Nizami, *Studies in medieval Indian history and culture*, Allahabad, 1966, pp. 24-40.

'ulama'. The Sultan had undoubtedly sought to crush the power of the 'ulama' but under the leadership of Saiyid Qutbu'd-Din they managed to overthrow the Sultan himself in 1242.[1] Although Qazi Minhaj Siraj himself headed another group amongst the 'ulama', he was strongly opposed to the attempts at domination and the intriguing of the rival party and certainly did not approve of sufis dabbling in the political arena.

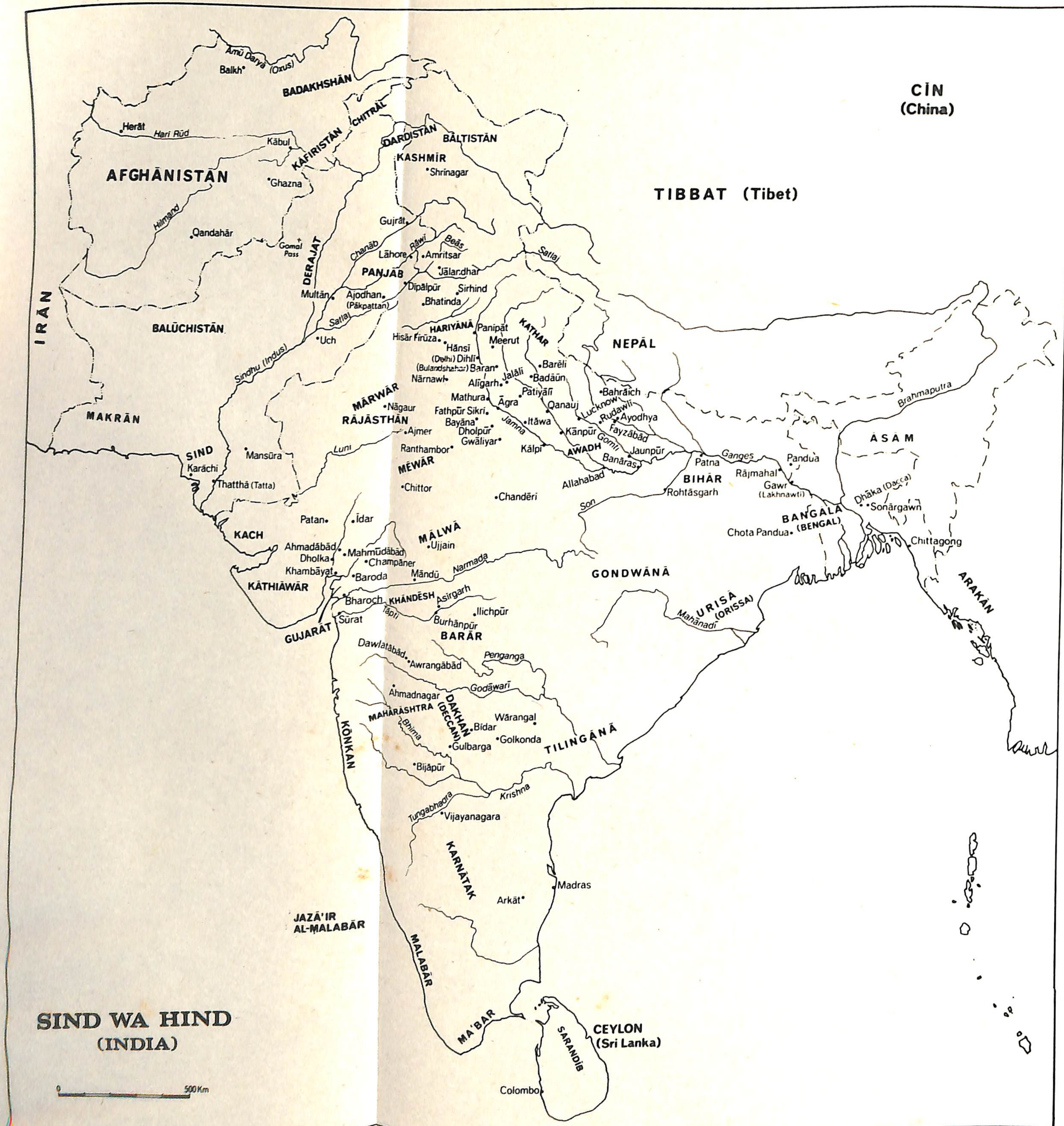
Ziya'u'd-Din Barani, the author of the *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, was both an *'alim* and a sufi, but above all he was an ambitious courtier. His work is an interesting psychological study in the analysis of the background to conflicts between different groups at all levels of society. Dealing with both pathological behaviour and the essential needs of human behaviour, Barani outlines the sufi response to the momentous historical and political developments between 1266 and 1357.

The Moorish traveller, Shamsu'd-Din Abu 'Abdu'llah Muhammad, known as Ibn Battuta, who was born at Tangier on 17 Rajab 703/24 February 1304, heads the list of famous travellers to India who put pen to paper to record their experiences. Leaving Tangier on 13 June 1325, Ibn Battuta travelled through North Africa, Egypt, Syria, Mecca, Iran, Iraq, Asia Minor, Transoxiana and modern Afghanistan, before arriving in the Indus valley on 12 September 1333. From there he went to Delhi and in July 1342 travelled to the Deccan, the Indian coastal regions in the south, Maldives, Ceylon, Bengal, Assam, Sumatra and China. He returned to Africa via Sumatra, Malabar, the Persian Gulf, Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Hejaz, before reaching Fez in November 1349. Visits to Granada and Morocco were also made by Ibn Battuta who then journeyed across the Sahara before returning to Sijilmasa at the end of 1353.

In Fez he dictated the account of his travels to the scholar, Ibn Juzayy (1321–1357) whose services were placed at his disposal by the Marinid king Abu 'Inan (1349–58) of Fez. The work was completed in December 1357. A final draft was ready early the following year, which the author called *Tuhfat al-Nuzzar fi Ghara'ib al-Amsar wa 'Aja'ib al Asfar*, but which was also known by the simple title, the *Rihla*. Ibn Battuta died in Morocco in either 1368–69 or 1377.

Throughout his long travels Ibn Battuta stayed in both Islamic and non-Islamic countries, but even in countries where Islam was not the dominating religion, he found a sizable Muslim population. He came into contact with a broad cross-section of society, had many new experiences and underwent much hardship. He served at many courts and was the guest of many rulers, nobles and members of the 'ulama'. Ibn Battuta also stayed with merchants and members of the artisan guilds (*asnaf*), in sufi khanqahs and in the hospices run by the *Akhi* and *Futuwwa* organizations. He also was a keen observer of the customs and lives of qalandars and yogis. What makes Ibn Battuta's *Rihla* invaluable is that it also contains a

[1]*Tabaqat-i Nasiri*, pp. 195-97.



SIND WA HIND
(INDIA)
0
500 Km
CĪN
(China)
TIBBAT (Tibet)
AFGHĀNISTĀN
IRĀN
BALŪCHISTĀN
MAKRĀN
SIND
KACH
KĀTHIĀWĀR
GUJARĀT
Amū Daryā (Oxus)
Balkh
BADAKHSHĀN
CHITRĀL
KĀFIRISTĀN
DARDISTĀN
BĀLTISTĀN
KASHMĪR
Shrīnagar
Herāt
Hari Rūd
Kābul
Ghazna
Hilmand
Qandahār
Gomal Pass
DERAJAT
Gujrāt
Chanāb
Rāwī
Beās
Lāhore
Amritsar
PANJĀB
Jālandhar
Multān
Ajodhan
(Pākpattan)
Dīpālpūr
Sirhind
Bhatinda
Satlaj
Uch
Sindhu (Indus)
Mansūra
Karāchi
Thatthā (Tatta)
HARIYĀNĀ
Panipāt
Hisār Fīrūza
Hānsī
Meerut
KATHAR
(Delhi) Dihlī
(Bulandshahar) Baran
Nārnawl
Alīgarh
Jalālī
Barēli
Badāūn
Patiyālī
Mathura
Āgra
Fathpūr Sikri
Bayāna
Dholpūr
Gwāliyar
Jamna
Itāwa
Qanauj
Kālpi
Kānpūr
MĀRWĀR
Nāgaur
RĀJĀSTHĀN
Ajmer
Luni
Ranthambor
MEWĀR
Chittor
Chandēri
NEPĀL
Bahrāich
Lucknow
Rudawlī
Ayodhya
Fayzābād
Gomti
AWADH
Jaunpūr
Banāras
Allahabad
Son
Satlaj
Patna
Ganges
BIHĀR
Rohtāsgarh
Rājmahal
Pandua
Gawr
(Lakhnawti)
BANGALA
(BENGAL)
Chota Pandua
Dhāka (Dacca)
Sonārgawn
Chittagong
Brahmaputra
ĀSAM
ARAKAN
Patan
Īdar
MĀLWA
Ujjain
Ahmadābād
Dholka
Khambāyat
Mahmūdābād
Champāner
Baroda
Māndū
Narmada
GONDWĀNĀ
Bharoch
KHĀNDESH
Asīrgarh
Tāpti
Sūrat
Ilichpūr
Burhānpūr
BARĀR
URISĀ
(ORISSA)
Mahānadī
Dawlatābād
Awrangābād
Penganga
Godāwarī
Ahmadnagar
MAHĀRĀSHTRA
DAKHAN
(DECCAN)
Bhīma
Bīdar
Wārangal
Golkonda
Gulbarga
TILINGĀNĀ
KŌNKAN
Bījāpūr
Krishna
Tungabhadra
Vijayanagara
KARNĀTAK
Madras
Arkāt
JAZĀ'IR
AL-MALABĀR
MALABĀR
MA'BAR
SARANDĪB
CEYLON
(Sri Lanka)
Colombo

comparative study of the political, economic, social and religious institutions of the various countries the author visited and the penetrating analysis of his impressions.

The Arabic maritime literature, the accounts of other travellers and the works describing sufi tombs, khanqahs and *ribats* ('hospices') also manage to shed interesting light on the development of sufism in the Islamic world. An important work, for example, is the *Isharat ila ma'rifat al-ziyarat* by al-Harawi who died in 611/1214.

Other historical and geographical works which add further details to the study of sufism in India, and its relation to the rest of the Islamic world, may be seen in the Bibliography.

Chapter One

Early Sufism

SUFISM represents the inward or esoteric side of Islam; it may, for the sake of convenience, be described as the mystical dimension of Islam. As depicted by Walter T. Stace, mysticism is not to be understood in the sense of the occult or telepathy, and he excludes even visions and voices from the list of mystical phenomena. 'A fully developed mystical experience,' says Stace, 'involves the apprehension of *an ultimate non-sensuous unity in all things*, a oneness or a One to which neither the sense nor the reason can penetrate. In other words, it entirely transcends our sensory-intellectual consciousness.'[1]

Mystical experience is not necessarily a religious phenomenon. Although it may give mystic feelings of peace, joy and ecstasy independent of a religious framework, followers of different religions can operate mystically within the laws of their own creed. Thus we have Hindu mysticism, Jewish mysticism, Christian mysticism, Islamic mysticism and Buddhist mysticism, although, of course, the Buddha of the Pali canon of the Hinayana repudiated the concept of self. To religious mystics, their experiences involve an intuitive or spiritual awareness of God which transcend empirical experience; the Reality which mystics seek to understand is apprehended through their whole being. Reality, although indescribable, is expressed by symbols. A hymn in the Rigveda reminds that: 'They call Him Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Agni, and even the fleet-winged celestial bird Garuda. The One Reality, the learned speak of in many ways.'[2]

From time immemorial, the concern of the religious mystic had been the quest for Reality, but all genuine mystics found their experiences inexpressible and indescribable. The following parable, indicating how a man can only form a partial and distorted view of God, is often repeated by sufis. It is related from the *Hadiqatu'l-Haqiqa* by the great sufi poet from Ghazna, Abu'l Majd Majdud Sana'i, who died about 1130-31:

'Not far from Ghur once stood a city tall
Whose denizens were sightless one and all.

[1]W.T. Stace, *The teachings of the mystics*, New York, 1960, pp. 14–5.
[2]*Rigveda*, I, p. 64.

A certain Sultan once, when passing nigh,
Had pitched his camp upon the plain hard by,
Wherein, to prove his splendour, rank and state,
Was kept an elephant most huge and great.
Then in the townsmen's minds arose desire
To know the nature of this creature dire.
Blind delegates by blind electorate
Were therefore chosen to investigate
The beast, and each, by feeling trunk or limb,
Strove to acquire an image clear of him.
Thus each conceived a visionary whole,
And to the phantom clung with heart and soul.

When to the city they were come again,
The eager townsmen flocked to them amain.
Each one of them—wrong and misguided all—
Was eager his impressions to recall.
Asked to describe the creature's size and shape,
They spoke, while round about them, all agape,
Stamping impatiently, their comrades swarm
To hear about the monster's shape and form.
Now, for his knowledge each inquiring wight
Must trust to touch, being devoid of sight,
So he who'd only felt the creature's ear,
On being asked, "How doth its heart appear?"
"Mighty and terrible," at once replied,
"Like to a carpet, hard and flat and wide!"

Then he who on its trunk had laid his hand
Broke in: "Nay: nay! I better understand!
'Tis like a water-pipe, I tell you true,
Hollow, yet deadly and destructive too";
While he who'd had but leisure to explore
The sturdy limbs which the great beast upbore,
Exclaimed, "No, no! To all men be it known
'Tis like a column tapered to a cone!"

Each had but known one part, and no man all;
Hence into deadly error each did fall.
No way to know the all man's heart can find:
Can knowledge e'er accompany the blind?
Fancies and phantoms vain as these, alack!
What else can you expect from fool in sack?
Naught of Almighty God can creatures learn,
Nor e'en the wise such mysteries discern.'[1]

[1] *Hadiqatu'l-Haqiqa*, excerpt tr. by E.G. Browne, *A literary history of Persia*, II, Cambridge, 1964, pp. 319-20.

Sufism is not, therefore, a rigid system. According to one outstanding sufi, the paths by which its followers seek God: 'are in number as the souls of men.' Asceticism, purification, love and gnosis assist sufis in finding the Universal Self. These are merely the means to an end, and not the end itself.

A modern scholar says: 'Muhammad was a sufi when on his way to becoming a prophet.'[1] Sufis believe that Muhammad was indeed a sufi throughout his whole life, and an early chapter on the divine revelation imparted to him, addressed him this way:

> 'O thou wrapped in thy raiment!
> Keep vigil the night long, save a little—
> A half thereof, or abate a little thereof
> Or add (a little) thereto—and chant the Qur'an
> in measure
> For We shall charge thee with a word of weight.
> Lo! the vigil of the night is (a time) when
> impression is more keen and speech more certain.
> Lo! thou hast by day a chain of business.
> So remember the name of thy Lord and devote
> thyself with a complete devotion—
> Lord of the East and the West; there is no God
> save Him; so choose thou Him alone for thy defender—
> And bear with patience what they utter, and
> part from them with a fair leave-taking.
> Leave Me to deal with the deniers, lords of
> ease and comfort (in this life); and do thou
> respite them awhile.'[2]

Again in another chapter Muhammad is reminded:

> 'So wait patiently (O Muhammad) for thy Lord's
> decree, for surely thou art in Our sight; and
> hymn the praise of thy Lord when thou uprisest,
>
> And in the night-time also hymn His praise, and
> at the setting of the stars.'[3]

Again Muhammad is also told how rivalry for worldly success impedes a pursuit of the religious life.

[1] D.B. Macdonald, *Development of Muslim theology, jurisprudence and constitutional theory*, New York, 1903, p. 227.

[2] *Qur'an*, LXXIII, I–II, tr., by M.M. Pickthall, *The meaning of the glorious Koran*, New York.

[3] *Qur'an*, LII, 48-9.

'Rivalry in worldly increase distracteth you
Until ye come to the graves.
Nay, but ye will come to know!
Nay, but ye will come to know!
Nay, would that ye knew (now) with a sure knowledge!
For ye will behold hell-fire.
Aye, ye will behold it with sure vision.
Then, on that day, ye will be asked concerning pleasure.'[1]

In September 622, the Prophet migrated from Mecca to Medina plunged himself into organizing his community and into fighting wars against his religious opponents. However, all sources unanimously relate that he himself continued to lead an exceedingly austere and ascetic life. He considered his own pursuit of *faqr*, that is, a life of poverty and resignation to God's will, a source of personal pride. Among Muhammad's companions at this time were a number of people who dwelt in the Medina mosque practising poverty and self-mortification. They were called *Ahl al-Suffa* or *Ashab-i Suffa* (The People of the Veran-dah). Islam made prayers, five times a day, and fasting for the whole of Ramazan, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, obligatory. However, the *Ahl al-Suffa* and many other followers of Muhammad, observed incessant prayer and fasting, as did the Prophet himself. The Qur'anic chapter entitled *Al-Bara'at* (Immunity) or *Al-Tauba* (Repentance) was revealed in the Ninth Hijri or 630 AD. and contained a declaration of immunity from obligations for the idolatrous tribes which had repeatedly violated their treaties. Moreover, it drew attention to the duties of Muslims to avoid hoarding wealth.

'Oh ye who believe! Lo! many of the (Jewish) rabbis and the (Christian) monks devour the wealth of mankind wantonly and debar (men) from the way of Allah. They who hoard up gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allah, unto them give tidings (O Muhammad) of a painful doom.
On the day when it will (all) be heated in the fire of hell, and their foreheads and their flanks of their backs will be branded therewith (and it will be said unto them): Here is that which ye hoarded for yourselves. Now taste of what ye used to hoard.'[2]

The decade following the death of Muhammad on 8 June, 632, saw the Arab town dwellers and Bedouins, whom he had united into one community (*umma*), become the masters of Syria, Iraq, Iran, Egypt, Tripoli

[1] *Qur'an*, CII, 1-8. [2] *Qur'an*, IX, 34-5.

and parts of the African peninsula. They were now not only exposed to the evils of material prosperity, but to new ideas of the ancient civilized world. These made varying impacts upon the companions of Muhammad. Some amassed immense fortunes. But members of the group known as *Ahl al-Suffa* and a few others continued to lead lives immersed in poverty and asceticism. Most prominent of these was Abu Zar al-Ghifari (died in 652 or 653). His revolutionary outspokenness led him into court exile during the reign of 'Usman (644–56), the third Caliph. Abu Darda 'Uwaymar bin Zaid, one of the *Ahl al-Suffa*, used to say that 'one hour of reflection was better than forty nights of prayer, and that one particle of righteousness, combined with godliness and assured faith, was preferable to unlimited ritual observance.'[1]

The reign of the third Caliph saw the beginning of internal tensions; while 'Ali bin Abi Talib's reign in 656–61 was torn with civil wars. 'Ali transferred his capital from Medina to Kufa and was there assassinated. Mu'awiyya (661–80), who fought incessantly against 'Ali, founded the hereditary Umayyad Caliphate (661–750) with Damascus as its capital, superseding both Medina and Kufa.

The refusal of 'Ali's son, Husain, to accept Mu'awiyya's son, Yazid I (680–83), as Caliph involved Husain in a war of self-annihilation: He and his followers, numbering less than a hundred, were forced into battle at Karbala, in Iraq, against a large army led by Yazid's governor there. As a result of this battle, Husain and his followers were massacred on 10 Muharram 61/10 October 680. A party under 'Ali had previously emerged believing that their leader's right to succeed Muhammad had been usurped by the first three Caliphs. The death of Husain and the persecution of his successors by the Umayyads made their followers even more determined in their opposition to the Umayyad Caliphs. This group came to be called Shi'as or Shi'is, that is, followers of the House of 'Ali. The majority of Muslims who did not question the order of succession of the first four Caliphs became known as Sunnis.

Differences between Sunnis and Shi'is sharpened under the 'Abbasids (750–1258). The latter had replaced the Umayyads on the pretext of restoring the rights of the House of 'Ali but in reality they were inveterate enemies of the Shi'is. Both sects developed their own theologies and legal schools. Sunni religious law, *Fiqh*, was founded by four outstanding jurists, all of whom established independent schools of jurisprudence. The followers of Abu Hanifa who died in 767 are Hanafis and those of Malik bin Anas (d. 795) are called Malikis. Al-Shafi'i who died in 820 founded a Shafi'i school and Ahmad bin Hanbal whose death occurred in 855 was the founder of the Hanbalite school. The ninth century saw the compilation of various collections of traditions of the Prophet Muhammad. Six different works, known as the six canonical books, are the rock on which Sunni traditions, or *Hadis*, of Muhammad are based.

[1]Margaret Smith, *An early mystic of Baghdad*, London, 1935, p. 63.

The Shi'is do not follow either the four Sunni schools of jurisprudence or the six canonical *Hadis* books, but the laws and traditions ascribed to their own Imams.

The development of diverse traditions of laws and *Hadis* by Sunnis and Shi'is in the first three centuries of Islam synchronized with further divisions amongst Sunnis themselves on philosophical questions. The Murjites taught that the judgement of every true believer who committed a grievous sin would be deferred until the Resurrection. *Kalam* (literally meaning speech, or scholastic theology) is an attempt to answer the question of the relation between divine decrees and human actions. Their earliest manifestations were seen in the Qadariyya and the Jabariyya schools. The Jabariyyas taught that God's immutable and eternal decree left no scope for free will, thus rejecting the absolutism of predestination. The Mu'tazilas followed the Qadariyyas and their adherence to reasoning enabled them to obtain a resounding victory over the dualist Manichaeans and Nestorian Christians. They believed that God was omniscient through His essence, rather than His knowledge. The eternity of God was the unique property of His Own essence and if there existed divine attributes added to God's essence, His unity would be impaired. Righteousness was duly rewarded and evil punished; man himself was the author of his action, both good and evil. A man who killed another man by throwing a stone was the cause of the latter's death. S. Pines believes that the Mu'tazilite theory is very different from all Greek atomistic doctrines and sees in it an 'undeniable similarity between various important points of the *Kalam* doctrine and the Indian (Nyaya-Vaisheshika and Buddhist) atomistic doctrines.'[1]

Under the Umayyads the development of the Mu'tazilite was slow, but their greatest supporter was the 'Abbasid Caliph al-Ma'mun (813–33). He instituted an inquisitorial tribunal for the trial and conviction of those who denied the Mu'tazilite dogma of 'the creation (*khalq*) of the Qur'an' in opposition to the orthodox view that the Qur'an was the identical reproduction of a celestial original.'

Abu'l Hasan al-Ash'ari (b. 873–74, d. 935–36) began his career as a Mu'tazilite. Later he renounced the dogma of his masters and laid the foundations of orthodox *Kalam*, arguing rationally along the pattern laid down by his former teachers. W.M. Watt explains the differences between the two ways of thinking as follows:

'1. He (al-Ash'ari) held that God had eternal attributes such as knowledge, sight, speech, and that it was by these that he was knowing, seeing, speaking, whereas the Mu'tazila said that God had no attributes distinct from His essence.
2. The Mu'tazila said that Qur'anic expressions such as God's hand and face, must be interpreted to mean 'grace,' 'essence' and so on.

[1]P.M. Holt *et. al.*, ed, *The Cambridge history of Islam*, II, Cambridge, 1970, p. 793.

Al-Ash'ari, whilst agreeing that nothing corporeal was meant, held that they were real attributes whose precise nature was unknown. He took God's sitting on the throne in a similar way.

3. Against the view of the Mu'tazila that the Qur'an was created, al-Ash'ari maintained that it was God's speech, an eternal attribute, and therefore uncreated.
4. In opposition to the view of the Mu'tazila that God could not literally be seen, since that would imply that He is corporeal and limited, al-Ash'ari held that the vision of God in the world to come is a reality, though we cannot understand the manner of it.
5. In contrast to the emphasis of the Mu'tazila on the reality of choice in human activity, al-Ash'ari insisted on God's omnipotence; everything, good and evil, is willed by God, and He creates the acts of men by creating in men the power to do each act. (The doctrine of "acquisition" or *kasb* which was in later times characteristic of the Ash'ariyya, is commonly attributed to al-Ash'ari himself, but, though he was familiar with the concept, he does not appear to have held the doctrine himself.)
6. While the Mu'tazila with their doctrine of *al-manzila bayn al-manzilatayn* held that any Muslim guilty of a serious sin was neither believer nor unbeliever, al-Ash'ari insisted that he remained a believer, but was liable to punishment in the Fire.
7. Al-Ash'ari maintained the reality of various eschatological features, the Basin, the Bridge, the Balance and intercession by Muhammad, which were denied or rationally interpreted by the Mu'tazila.'[1]

Both the Mu'tazila and the Ash'ari depended on Aristotelian logic to counter and discredit the beliefs of their respective opponents. However, the legacy of Near Eastern Hellenism, semi-orientalized by Aramaic and Christian influences, which had survived in Alexandria, Antioch and Gondeshapur, was inherited by the *Falasifa* or Muslim philosophers. The intellectual mysticism of Plotinus, and the doctrines of Hermetic origin, also made a deep impact upon them. The corpus of Greek literature translated under the 'Abbasids solved the difficulties of suitable terminology and went a long way towards producing philosophers such as al-Kindi (d. *c*. 850), Razi (865–925), Farabi (d. 950) and Ibn Sina or Avicenna (980–1037).

Political expansion, sectarian controversies, theological and philosophical developments, all synchronized with the evolution of sufism. This word was not originally used to describe the movement begun by the companions of the Prophet Muhammad. They were better known by the distinguished title, *Sahaba*, or companions of the Prophet Muhammad. Their second generation was called *Tabi'un*, that is, those

[1]*Encyclopaedia of Islam* (new edition), I, p. 694.

who had seen one or more of the associates of Muhammad, while the third generation was the *Taba' Tabi'un*, followers of those who had seen one or more of the *Tabi'un*. They deemed the rule of the first four Caliphs 'pious', which merely implied that the political activities of the Umayyads or the 'Abbasids were of no concern to them. They had no use for sectarian controversies between the Sunnis and the Shi'is. The first Caliph Abu Bakr (632–34) was a paragon of voluntary poverty to the sufis and taught them to renounce all their material goods for Islam.[1] The patched gown or *muraqqa'* of the second Caliph 'Umar (634-44) was a symbol of his self-denial; his life exemplified the fact that spiritualists outwardly were a part of mankind, but inwardly their hearts clung to God, constantly returning to Him. Their worldly activities failed to divert them from God, for the spiritualist never loved the world.[2] The life of the third Caliph, 'Usman (644–56), was the best of all possible examples in resignation during a crisis.[3] But the fourth Caliph, 'Ali (656–61), was regarded by sufis as their Shaikh (leader or teacher) in both the theory and practice of sufism. The former consisted of principles and the latter rested entirely on endurance of affliction. 'Ali was a model for sufis 'in respect to the truths of outward expressions and the subtleties of inward meanings, the stripping of one's self of all property either of this world or of the next, and consideration of divine providence.'[4]

A contemporary of Muhammad and the Righteous Caliphs was the ascetic Uways al-Qarani. The Prophet had never met him, but forecast that 'Umar and 'Ali would visit him some time. After Muhammad's death, 'Umar and 'Ali sought out Uways in Qaran, an oasis habitation in the Najd desert. They conveyed to him the Prophet's greetings. According to Uways, safety lay in solitude for 'the heart of the solitary one was free from thoughts of others.'[5] Under no circumstances did he wish for anything from men. As long as the devil had captured a man's heart, and sensual passions continued to fill his breast, any thought of the present or future worlds came to him in a way which made him aware of mankind, and he was therefore fettered to it. True isolation was the only means of achieving intimacy with God, and those who managed to attain it were then unaffected by human contact.

Towards the end of his life, Uways left his lonely desert life and went to Kufa. He was involved in the battle of Siffin, between June and July 657, fighting for 'Ali against Mu'awiyya, where he became a casualty. From the eleventh century onwards, sufis who did not obtain initiation from a particular preceptor called themselves Uwaysis.

After 'Ali's martyrdom, his son Hasan (b. 624–25) abdicated as Caliph and retired to Medina where he was poisoned in 669–70. Hasan was long remembered by sufis for his utter lack of concern for adulation or criticism

[1] 'Ali bin 'Usman al-Jullabi al-Hujwiri, *The Kashf al-Mahjub*, tr. by R.A. Nicholson, London, 1936, pp. 70–1.

[2] ibid, p. 72. [3] ibid, pp. 73–4. [4] ibid, p. 74. [5] ibid.

and when abused would listen politely. He believed strongly in the adoption of the middle course, that is, between free-will and predestination. To mystics Hasan's brother Husain had sacrificed his life for God. Following the example of Husain's son, Zayn al-'Abidin (d. 712), sufis became dedicated to long hours spent in prayer and they considered his prayer books the epitome of devotional literature. In the spirit of his father, Zayn al-'Abidin's son, al-Baqir (d. 731), would cry:

> 'O my God and my Lord, night has come, and the power of monarchs has ceased, and the stars are shining in the sky, and all mankind are asleep and silent, and the Banu Umayya (the Umayyads) have gone to rest and shut their doors and set guards to watch over them; and those who desired anything from them have forgotten their business. Thou, O God, art the Living, the Lasting, the Seeing, the Knowing. Sleep and slumber cannot overtake Thee. He who does not acknowledge that Thou art such as I have described is unworthy of Thy bounty. O Thou whom nothing withholds from any other thing, whose eternity is not impaired by Day and Night, whose doors of Mercy are open to all who call upon Thee, and whose entire treasures are lavished on those who praise Thee: Thou dost never turn away the beggar, and no creature in earth or heaven can prevent the true believer who implores Thee from gaining access to Thy court. O Lord, when I remember death and the grave and the reckoning, how can I take joy in this world? Therefore, since I acknowledge Thee to be One, I beseech Thee to give me peace in the hour of death, without torment, and pleasure in the hour of reckoning, without punishment.'[1]

The greatest scholar among 'Ali's descendants was Ja'far al-Sadiq (born 699–700 or 702–03). The Shi'is regard only those *Ahadis* (the plural of *Hadis*) which Ja'far transmitted as authentic. However, the Sunnis also regard Ja'far as an authority on all problems of *Fiqh*. Abu Hanifa, Malik bin Anas and the founder of Mu'tazalite *Kalam*, Wasil bin 'Ata, heard the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad from Ja'far directly. Jabir bin Hayyan, the founder of Arabic alchemy, was one of Ja'far's disciples. Sufis found his writings a most valuable guide. One of his popular sayings was: 'Whoever knows God turns his back on everything else.' Ja'far was killed in 765. With his death Medina began to lose its importance as the guiding light behind developments in the esoteric doctrines of Islam. The growth of the four schools of Sunni jurisprudence, and the crystallization of the Shi'i school, based on the teachings of Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq's, the Ja'fariyya or Imamiyya school of law, forced sufis to become dependant on the Sunni school of jurisprudence for rules

[1] 'Ali bin 'Usman al-Jullabi al-Hujwiri, *The Kashf al-Mahjub*, tr. by R.A. Nicholson, London, 1936, p. 78.

regarding external prayers and religious worship. Of course, in reality the sufi system itself transcended such legal differences.

Medina and Mecca remained the two holy places of Islam. Immigrants from other parts of the Islamic world also increased their importance. However in the first century of Islam many new centres of Muslim culture came into existence. Two such places were Basra and Kufa.

The first, in Lower-Mesopotamia, on the Shatt al-Arab estuary was founded by the Arabs in 638, on the site of the Iranian settlement known as Vahishtabaz Ardasher. In the beginning it was a military camp controlling the route from the Persian Gulf, Iraq and Iran, but soon it developed into an important cultural centre of classical Islamic civilization. Basra's pride was Hasan al-Basri (642–728). Born in Medina into the *Tabi'un* class, after the battle of Siffin he settled in Basra. Hasan Basri was too young to become the disciple of 'Ali bin Abi Talib (656–61), yet the sufi orders trace their spiritual descent through him from Muhammad and 'Ali. Anecdotes describing Hasan's conversion to sufism present him as reasonably mature at the time, and as a jewel merchant trading with Byzantium. Hasan's discipleship with 'Ali and his conversion by him, would appear to be pious myths composed by later writers. Both medieval and modern scholars have challenged their authenticity. According to the sufi tradition, however, Hasan became 'Ali's disciple through some indescribable spiritual experience.

What is more precisely known is that Hasan-al-Basri was both an outstanding scholar and an eloquent speaker. The *Tafsir*, an exegesis on the Qur'an, said to have been compiled by him did not survive. Only fragments of his sermons and *risalas* or epistles to the Umayyad Caliphs, 'Abdu'l Malik (685–705) and 'Umar II (717–20), remain, as well as some other excerpts from his writings.

Hasan's bold criticism of the repressive religio-political policies of Hajjaj bin Yusuf, the Umayyad governor of Iraq, compelled him to go into hiding in 705, where he was forced to remain until Hajjaj's death in 714. However, in general Hasan did not approve of rebellion against, or the removal of, vicious governors. He pleaded that 'violent actions of tyrants were a punishment sent by God which could not be opposed by the sword but must be endured with patience.' Hasan condemned the possession of riches and of all worldly attachments. According to him, *munafiqs* (hypocrites) subject to the values of world were sinners without any concern for their faith. Sinners were fully responsible for their actions, Hasan believed. His letter to Caliph 'Abdu'l Malik indicates that he was a *Qadariyya*. Preaching asceticism in his sermons, he succinctly expressed his ideas this way: 'Make this world into a bridge over which you cross but on which you do not build! and 'Repolish these hearts (the seats of religious feeling), for they very quickly grow rusty,'[1] and in this verse:

[1]*Encyclopaedia of Islam* (new edition), III, p. 374.

'Not he who dies and is at rest is dead,
He only is dead who is dead while yet alive.'[1]

The following conversation was recorded in the *Kashf al-Mahjub* between a Bedouin and Hasan on the idea of *sabr* (patience). This, too, reveals Hasan's deep asceticism. Hasan remarked:

> "Patience is of two sorts: firstly, patience in misfortune and affliction; and secondly, patience to refrain from the things which God has commanded us to renounce and has forbidden us to pursue." The Bedouin said: "Thou art an ascetic; I never saw anyone more ascetic than thou art." "O Bedouin!", cried Hasan, "my asceticism is nothing but desire, and my patience is nothing but lack of fortitude." The Bedouin begged him to explain this saying, "for (he said) Thou hast shaken my belief." Hasan replied: "My patience is misfortune and my submission proclaims my fear of Hell-fire, and this is lack of fortitude (*jaza*); and my asceticism in this world is desire for the next world, and this is the quintessence of desire. How excellent is he who takes no thought of his own interest! so his patience is for God's sake, not for the saving of himself from Hell; and his asceticism is for God's sake, not for the purpose of bringing himself into Paradise. This is the mark of true sincerity." And it is related that he said: "Association with the wicked produces suspicion of the good."[2]

By Hasan's time the wearing of wool (*suf*) had become fashionable among Muslim ascetics but Hasan Basri reminded them: 'He who wears wool out of humility towards God increases the illumination of his insight and his heart, but he who wears it out of pride and arrogance will be thrust down to Hell with the devils.'[3]

The wearing of wool was, according to sufis, a legacy of the prophets and the Christian apostles and ascetics. A modern Irani scholar rightly points out that the word, sufi, for a wearer of a woollen garment is incorrect from the point of view of Arabic grammar. The word was invented by some Irani on the pattern of the grammar of his own language and assimilated into Arabic.[4]

The impact of Hasan's teaching, both in relation to intellectual and spiritual movements, was far-reaching. Wasil bin 'Ata', the founder of the Mu'tazila movement, was his disciple. Abu Talib Makki, the author of *Qut al-Qulub*, an early work on sufism in Arabic, considered Hasan an Imam, or leader, in sufi doctrines, and that all mystics walked in his

[1] *An early mystic of Baghdad*, p. 69. [2] Nicholson, p. 86.

[3] *An early mystic of Baghdad*, pp. 68–9.

[4] Jalalu'd-Din Huma'i, *Misbahu'l-Hidaya*, Tehran, nd (2nd edition), pp. 81-2. Huma'i discusses in detail the source of the word 'sufi' in the introduction to his book; see, pp. 63-85.

footsteps, drawing their inspiration from him.[1] 'Ali and Hasan Basri fulfilled the same role for members of the *Futuwwa* orders. These were chivalric groups who fought against injustice and its source wherever it was found. From the time of the eighth century, both movements, the *Futuwwa* and the sufi, drew closer together in mutual assistance and respect.[2]

Of the many spiritualists gathered around Hasan Basri, the most gifted was Habib ibn Muhammad, an Iranian or 'Ajmi, who had settled at Basra. Prior to being Hasan's disciple, Habib had been a usurer, known for his evil habits. The preceptor and his disciple became so close that they even shared the same cell for a period after the former had sheltered with Habib while hiding from the governor of Iraq. The following passage from Hujwiri's *Kashf al-Mahjub*, relates the significance of sincerity and devotion in prayers, rather than language and form:

> 'One evening Hasan of Basra passed by the door of his cell. Habib had uttered the call to prayer and was standing, engaged in devotion. Hasan came in, but would not pray under his leadership, because Habib was unable to speak Arabic fluently or recite the Qur'an correctly. The same night, Hasan dreamed that he saw God and said to Him: "O Lord, wherein does Thy good pleasure consist?" and that God answered: "O Hasan, you found My good pleasure, but did not know its value: if...you had said your prayers after Habib, and if the rightness of his intention had restrained you from taking offence at his pronunciation, I should have been well pleased with you."'[3]

Malik bin Dinar (d. *c.* 127/744), another important disciple of Hasan of Basra, had led an evil life before converting to sufism. He emphasized that sincerity bore the same relation to an action as the spirit did to the body; as the body without the spirit was lifeless, so an action without sincerity was also insubstantial.

Humbly Malik declared himself unfit to wear wool because according to him it was the mark of purity (*safa*). Of knowledge, Malik said:

> 'When the servant acquires knowledge in order to do good works... his knowledge increases; but if he acquires it for any other purpose

[1] *Qut al-Qulub*, Cairo, I, 1310/1891-93, p. 149.

[2] For Hasan Basri's life, see Abu Nu'aim, *Hilyat al-Auliya'*, Cairo, II, 1932-38, pp. 131-81; Ibn al-Jawzi: *al-Hasan al-Basri*, Cairo, 1931; al-Yafe'i, *Mir'at al-Janan*, I, Hyderabad, 1337-39/1918-20, pp. 229-32; Ibn Hajar, *Tahzib al-Tahzib*, II, Hyderabad, 1325-27/1907-09, pp. 263-70: Nicholson, pp. 86-7; L. Massignon, *Essai sur les origines du lexique technique de la mystique musulumane*, Paris, 1922, pp. 152-79; H. Ritter, 'Studien zur Geschichte der islamischen Frommigkeit. I. Hasan el-Basari' in *Der Islam*, XXI, 1933, pp. 1-83; A.J. Arberry, *Muslim saints and mystics*, London, 1966, pp. 20-5.

[3] Nicholson, p. 88. For Habib's life see Abu Nu'aim, VI, pp. 149-55; Ibn Hajar, II, p. 189; Arberry, pp. 32-8.

than to do good, he increases in wickedness and arrogance and contempt for the common folk.'[1]

Basra sufism would never have reached the heights it did without the female saint, Rabi'a bint Isma'il al-'Adwiya. Born into poverty, after the death of her parents Rabi'a was sold into slavery as a child, having been seized by a man in the street and sold for six *dirhams*.[2] Her boundless love of, and devotion to, God and her numerous, highly intense ecstatic experiences made her one of the greatest of all Islamic mystics. The date of her birth is unknown, but she appears to have died in 135/752 or 185/801. The sufi poet Faridu'd-Din 'Attar (d. *c.* 1220) apparently gained access to a lost work on Rabi'a. This not only enabled him to write a detailed biography of her but also to formulate several stories on her life, which became the subject of some of his poetical works, such as the *Musibat-Nama* and the *Ilahi-Nama*.

Rabi'a attained an exalted spiritual status through prayer and continual fasting. She remained celibate throughout her life. Many hagiologies say that sufis, Hasan Basri, Malik Dinar, Sufyan Sauri and Shaqiq Balkhi visited her frequently in her lonely hermitage and also at times when she withdrew to the wilderness. In the mountains, deer, mountain goats, ibexes and asses would surround her, and then flee at the sight of others, including sufis. A broken pitcher, out of which she drank and made ritual ablutions, an old reed mat, and a brick which she occasionally used as a pillow, were her only belongings. Rabi'a lived the life of a hermit. Ever since she had known God, she once said, she had turned her back on His creatures; she felt ashamed to ask for anything from the world's Creator, let alone human beings. On one occasion Rabi'a was taunted by some men that no woman had ever been a prophet. They were greeted with the retort that egoism and self worship had also been characteristics of men, and that at least no woman had ever been a hermaphrodite.

Neither the desire for paradise nor the fear of hell should be the incentive for prayers or love of God. Here below Rabi'a distinguishes between a selfish and disinterested love of God:

'In two ways have I loved Thee: selfishly,
And with a love that worthy is of Thee.
In selfish love my joy in Thee I find,
While to all else, and others, I am blind.
But in that love which seeks Thee worthily,
The veil is raised that I may look on Thee.
Yet is the praise in that or this not mine,
In this and that the praise is wholly Thine.'[3]

[1] *An early mystic of Baghdad*, pp. 69-70. For Malik's life, *see* Abu Nu'aim, II, pp. 357-89; al-Yafe'i, I, pp. 269-70; Ibn Hajar, X, pp. 14-5; Nicholson, pp. 89-90; Arberry, pp. 26-31.

[2] A coin worth less than a penny.

[3] Margaret Smith, *Rabi'a, the mystic*, Cambridge, 1925, p. 104.

This prayer epitomized Rabi'a's unique understanding of divine love. Her conception and expression of this idea is regarded as an important milestone in the development of sufism, just as the acceptance of an unselfish love of God became a crucial part of the journey of the individual sufi. Rabi'a's prayers included the following:

> 'O God, if I worship Thee for fear of Hell, burn me in Hell, and if I worship Thee in hope of Paradise, exclude me from Paradise; but if I worship Thee for Thy own sake, grudge me not Thy everlasting beauty.
> O God, my whole occupation and all my desire in this world, of all worldly things, is to remember Thee, and in the world to come, of all things of the world to come, is to meet Thee. This is on my side, as I have stated; now do Thou whatsoever Thou wilt.'[1]

Like Basra, Kufa originally was an Arab military cantonment in Iraq which had been founded immediately after the conquest of Mesopotamia. This was at the same time Basra was being constructed that is about 17/638. In Kufa lived Abu Hashim, the first spiritualist to be known as a sufi. He urged that inner transformation should be the goal of all mystics. Before his death at the end of the eighth century, a khanqah (sufi monastry) was founded in Ramla, near Jerusalem, by a Christian dignitary.[2]

Perhaps the greatest admirer of Abu Hashim was his fellow countryman, Sufyan Sawri. It was through the ideas of Abu Hashim, Sufyan believed, that sufis were able to experience the true essence of their discipline. Many of Hashim's sayings tend to indicate that he considered pride and vanity the greatest of all obstacles towards following the sufi path. 'It is far easier to dig a mountain with a needle than to cleanse the heart of arrogance and vanity,' Abu Hashim is believed to have remarked. Another occasion, after a qazi emerged from the house, of a vizier he said tearfully: 'May God protect people from knowledge which does not benefit anyone else.'[3]

Abu 'Abdu'llah Sufyan ibn Sa'id al Sawri, another leading sufi of that period, was born at Kufa in 97/715–16. Although he acquired a good knowledge of *Hadis* and law, he chose to become an ascetic. As he did openly disapprove of the political situation in Kufa at the time, he was forced to escape to Mecca in 158/774–75 and like Hasan of Basra before

[1] Arberry, p. 51.

[2] The story goes that the Christian dignitary encountered two dervishes who amicably chatted together, shared their food and then went their separate ways although they had never seen each other before. Impressed by the warmth between them the Christian later learned that there was no resting place for such dervishes so he built a khanqah for them. 'Abdu'llah Ansari, *Tabaqat al-Sufiyya*, Kabul, 1962, pp. 9-10.

[3] 'Abdu'r Rahman Jami, *Nafahatu'l-Uns*, Tehran, 1337/1918-19, pp. 31-2.

him was obliged to hide from the state persecution. Later Sufyan left for Basra where he died in 161/777–78. As well as being a sufi, Sufyan had been a jurist, and a school of jurisprudence which he founded survived for about two centuries.

Sufyan's compassion encompassed the animal as well as the human world. Rather than eating bread himself he would give it to a dog, explaining:

> 'If I give bread to the dog. . .he keeps watch over me all through the night so that I can pray. If I give it to my wife and child, they hold me back from my devotions.'[1]

Once, deeply moved by the pitiful cries of a caged bird awaiting sale in a bazaar, Sufyan bought it only to set it free. The bird, however, refused to leave him and became his lifelong companion, watching while he prayed during the night. After Sufyan's death, the bird suicided by dashing itself on the ground near its liberator's grave. A voice from the tomb was heard to say that God the Most High had forgiven the sufi because of his compassion for the creatures which were His.[2]

Mecca, Medina, Basra and Kufa were undoubtedly the earliest centres of Islam's contemplative and ascetic life. This does not mean that sufism developed in isolation and other mystic ideas and ascetic practices had no impact at all. The deep Christian influence in the early development of sufism is undeniable; Jesus was a model of self-denial and of the saintly life. That sufis tended to see Jesus in the light of their own traditions does not lessen the significance of the impact of the Nestorian and Jacobite churches on the movement.

The second two important regions where sufism blossomed were Iran and Khurasan. These countries had been conquered in the first century after the birth of Islam and a large number of their inhabitants embraced the new religion for varying reasons. However the difficulties of communication failed to place remote regions of Iran and Khurasan in the orbit of either of the distant rival Islamic capitals of the Umayyads in Damascus or the 'Abbasids in Baghdad. Azarbaijan, Gilan, Tabaristan and Gorgan remained centres for a number of new religio-political movements, as did Khurasan, a land of indefinite boundaries. By 1000 AD, when the celebrated Irani scholar, Abu'l-Rayhan Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Biruni (b. 973, died after 1050) wrote his monumental study of comparative religion, *Al-Asar al-Baqiyya'an il Qurun al-Khaliyya*, Buddhism had died out in the Khurasan region and only a mere handful

[1]Arberry, p. 131.

[2]For Sufyan's life see Abu Nu'aim, VI, p. 356 to VII, p. 143; Al-Khatib, *Tarikh Baghdad*, IX, Cairo, 1931, pp. 151-74; Ibn Khallikan, *Wafayat al-A'yan*, II, no. 252, Cairo, 1948; Al-Yafe'i, I, pp. 345-47; al-Zahabi, *Tazkirat al-Huffaz*, I, Hyderabad, 1914-15, pp. 190-93; Ibn Hajar, IV, pp. 111-15; Arberry, pp. 129-32.

of Buddhist monuments remained between Khurasan and India. However, during the eighth and tenth centuries some Buddhist works were still available in this region. Abu'l-'Abbas Iran Shahri, one of al-Biruni's authorities, drew on a treatise of Buddhism written by an author called Zurkan. Aspects of Hinduism were also studied in Khurasan and Iran. Judaism, Christianity and the Zoroastrianism of the Magi priesthood were also practised throughout these areas. The most interesting was the eclectic religion, Manichaeism, which had deeply penetrated Khurasan and survived as far as eastern and northern India.

The transformation of these above-mentioned areas into strongholds of sufism did not occur in isolation. Early sufi movements often contained converts from other religious communities, such as those of Zoroastrianism, Christianity, Judaism and so on. These members often imbued sufism with their ancestral philosophies. In order to better understand sufi developments from the eighth to the end of the tenth centuries AD our study has been divided into four regions: 1. Khurasan and Transoxiana; 2. Other parts of Iran; 3. Syria and Egypt; and 4. Baghdad.

Khurasan and Transoxiana

Khurasan, 'the Eastern Land,' in ancient Iran, included all the Arab provinces from Bastam to the Indian mountains and the country of the upper Oxus towards the Pamir. In this region Balkh, the ancient Bactria of the Achaemenid empire, was very important. Before Arab conquests, it was famous for its Zoroastrian temples, but the city's pride was the Buddhist cloister, the Nawbahar. This was raided by Arabs in 653 and conquered in 663–64. Firm Muslim control was established only after the conquests of Qutayba bin Muslim in 715. In 736 Khurasan's capital was transferred from Marw to Balkh.

The earliest known sufi of Balkh was Ibrahim bin Adham. According to sufi legends he was a prince who renounced his throne to lead the life of an ascetic. Al-Kalabazi relates that: '. . he (Ibrahim) went out to hunt for pleasure, and a voice called him, saying: "Not for this was thou created, and not to this was thou commanded." Twice the voice called him; and on the third occasion the call came from the pommel of his saddle. Then he said: "I will not disobey God henceforth, so long as my Lord protects me from sin."'[1] When translated from Arabic to Persian and from Persian to Malay and Javanese, the legend of Ibrahim became increasingly fanciful. Goldziher was the first scholar to point out the similarity of this story with the Buddha's conversion, however, such an interpretation has been questioned by Louis Massignon.[2] The circumstances of Ibrahim's conversion are indeed different to the Buddha's; the former renounced the world on the impetus of what he believed to be a

[1] A.J. Arberry, *The doctrine of the Sufis*, Cambridge, 1935, p. 108.

[2] *Journal Royal Asiatic Society*, 1904, pp. 132-33, L. Massignon, p. 63; *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (new edition), III, p. 986.

voice from God, the latter sought enlightenment because of contact with old age, disease and death.

Earlier Arabic sources tend to indicate that Ibrahim was born about 112/730 in the Arab community settlement in Balkh. Some time before 137/754 he migrated from Khurasan to Syria and lived in that region. He died in *c.* 161/777–78. According to 'Attar, he made a pilgrimage to Mecca where he lived for some time. He was married and left a child in Balkh, but advocated celibacy for mystics. A dervish who married, said Ibrahim, could be compared with someone embarking on a sea voyage—when children were born, he drowned.[1]

Although Ibrahim worked as a labourer, proceeds from his toil were given to the poor, while he himself went hungry. When travelling he would sell whatever he had with him to provide some comfort for his companions. He was sparing in his own consumption of food, but believed that the partaking of nourishment, which was lawfully earned, was more meritorious than prayer and fasting. To Ibrahim the world should be enjoyed by worldly people and the rewards of the Unseen should be reaped by souls which thirsted for it. For himself, he wanted only to remember God, and in the next world, to see Him.[2]

Abu 'Ali Shaqiq bin Ibrahim al-Azali was another great Balkh sufi. He had acquired an advanced religious education and earned his own livelihood. This prompted Shaqiq to adopt asceticism. Another story relating to Shaqiq was that when there was a fearful famine in Balkh, a young slave appeared at the bazaar, joyful and content. When asked why he was happy when so much sadness abounded, he replied that his own welfare did not concern him for his master was wealthy. Deeply touched by the faith expressed in this story, Shaqiq exclaimed:

> 'O Lord God, this youth rejoices so much in having a master who owns a single village, but Thou art the King of kings, and Thou hast promised to give us our daily bread; and nevertheless we have filled our hearts with all this sorrow because we are engrossed with worldly things.'[3]

When he became an ascetic, Shaqiq acknowledged this youth as his preceptor, but it was the example of Ibrahim bin Adham which seems to have prompted him to embrace mysticism. As a lecturer, his most significant contribution to sufi philosophy was on the subject of *tawakkul*, or resignation to the divine will. Through this he attracted many students and Shaqiq appears to have excelled even Ibrahim bin Adham at his

[1]Arberry, pp. 66–70.

[2]For his life see Al-Sulami, *Tabaqat al-Sufiyya*, Leiden, 1960, pp. 13–22; Abu Nu'aim, VII, p. 367 to VIII, p. 58; Qushairi, *Al-Risalat al-Qushairiyya*, Cairo, 1959, p. 8, *al-Yafe'i*, I, p. 349; Ibn Hajar, I, pp. 102–03; Ibn al-'Imad, I, pp. 255–56; *NU*, p. 41–3; Nicholson, pp. 103–05; Arberry, pp. 62–79.

[3]Nicholson, p. 112.

interpretation of this idea. If one received something from God, he should be thankful, said Shaqiq, if nothing was forthcoming, he should be patient, in the same manner as dogs behave towards their masters. For himself, Shaqiq would distribute anything he received. Renunciation was manifested by the ascetic through action and by the devotee through the tongue. Commenting on the religious people of his time, Shaqiq says:

> 'When the learned man is covetous..., whom can the ignorant man imitate? And when the poor man (*faqir*) is famed for his poverty, and is desirous of this world...whom can the covetous man find to imitate, in order to escape from his greed? When the shepherd is the wolf, who will care for the sheep?'[1]

According to Hujwiri, Shaqiq wrote a number of books on Sufism but none are in existence.

Shaqiq performed a pilgrimage and also visited Baghdad. The following conversation between the 'Abbasid Caliph, Harun al-Rashid (786–809), and Shaqiq is a very significant exposition of the sufi expectation of a ruler:

> "Are you Shaqiq the Ascetic?" Harun demanded when he came into his presence.
> "I am Shaqiq," he replied, "but not the Ascetic."
> "Counsel me," Harun commanded.
> ...Shaqiq proceeded. "Almighty God has set you in the place of Abu Bakr the Trusty, and requires trustiness from you as from him. He has set you in the place of 'Umar the Discriminator, and requires from you as from him discrimination between truth and falsehood. He has set you in the place of 'Usman of the Two Lights, and requires from you as from him modesty and nobility. He has set you in the place of 'Ali the Well-Approved, and requires from you as from him knowledge and justice..."God has a lodging place called Hell," Shaqiq said, "He has appointed you its doorkeeper, and has equipped you with three things—wealth, sword and whip. "With these three things," He commands, "keep the people away from Hell. If any man comes to you in need, do not grudge him money. If any man opposes God's commandment, school him with this whip. If any man slays another, lawfully exact retaliation on him with this sword." If you do not these things, you will be the leader of those that enter Hell!"..."You are the fountain, and your agents are the rivulets," said Shaqiq. "If the fountain is bright, it is not impaired by the darkness of the rivulets. But if the fountain is dark, what hope is there that the rivulets will be bright?"

[1] *An early mystic of Baghdad*, p. 75.

"...Suppose you are thirsting in the desert, so that you are about to perish," Shaqiq went on. "If in that moment you come upon a draught of water, how much will you be willing to give for it?"
"As much as the man demands," said Harun.
"And if he will not sell save for half your kingdom?"
"I would give that," Harun replied.
"And suppose you drink the water and then it will not come out of you, so that you are in danger of perishing," Shaqiq pursued. "Then someone tells you, 'I will cure you, but I demand half your kingdom.' What would you do?"
"I would give it," Harun replied.
"Then why do you vaunt yourself of a kingdom," said Shaqiq, "the value of which is one draught of water which you drink, and then it comes out of you?"
Harun wept, and sent Shaqiq away with all honour.'[1]

After Shaqiq's death as a martyr fighting in the holy wars[2] (*jihad*) in 194/810 between the Muslims and the heathen Turks, Abu 'Abdu'r-Rahman Hatim bin Unwan al-Asamm (the Deaf) followed in the footsteps of his preceptor, Shaqiq, on the path of asceticism and was the author of a number of works on ethics. He believed:

'Lust is of three kinds—lust in eating, lust in speaking, and lust in looking. Guard thy food by trust in God, thy tongue by telling the truth, and thine eye by taking example (*'ibrat*). Real trust in God proceeds from right knowledge, for those who know Him aright have confidence that He will give them their daily bread, and they speak and look with right knowledge, so that their food and drink is only love, and their speech is only ecstasy, and their looking is only contemplation. Accordingly, when they know aright they eat what is lawful, and when they speak aright they utter praise (of God), and when they look aright they behold Him, because no food is lawful except what He has given and permits to be eaten, and no praise is rightly offered to anyone in the eighteen thousand worlds except to Him, and it is not allowable to look on anything in the universe except His beauty and majesty. It is not lust when thou receivest food from Him and eatest by His leave, or when thou speakest of Him by His leave, or when thou seest His actions by His leave. On the other hand, it is lust when of thy own will thou eatest even lawful food, or of thy own will thou speakest even praise of Him, or of thy own will thou lookest even for the purpose of seeking guidance.'[3]

[1]Arberry, pp. 136–37.
[2]For Shaqiq's life see Sulami, pp. 54–9; Qushairi, p. 14; Yafe'i, I, p. 495; Ibn al-'Imad, I, p. 341; Nicholson, pp. 111–12; Arberry, pp. 133–37.
[3]Nicholson, p. 115.

Hatim al-Asamm visited Baghdad and died at Washjard near Tirmiz[1] in 237/851–52.

Abu Hamid Ahmad ibn Khazruya, also from Balkh, was one of its leading citizens. Married to the daughter of the local governor, after adopting the career of a sufi he became associated with Hatim al-Asamm and Abu Yazid of Bastam. Abu Hamid Ahmad was a strong believer in repression of carnal desires. To remain a stranger to the people of the town he wore the clothes of a soldier. This following quotation from the *Kashf al-Mahjub* is from amongst Ahmad's more important sayings:

> '"The way is manifest and the truth is clear, and the shepherd has uttered his call; after this if anyone loses himself, is it through his own blindness, that is, it is wrong to seek the way, since the way to God is like the blazing sun; do thou seek thyself, for when thou hast found thyself thou art come to thy journey's end, inasmuch as God is too manifest to admit of His being sought."'[2]

Abu Hamid Ahmad died in 240/854 at the age of ninety-five.[3]

The early trends of sufism in Balkh synchronized with spectacular developments in Marw. Among sufi luminaries in that region none could excel Abu 'Ali Fuzayl ibn Iyaz al-Talqani. Born in Samarqand, in his youth he had been neither a scholar nor a wealthy merchant, but a brigand operating between Marw and Abiward. However, Fuzayl was a gallant and discriminating bandit, he robbed neither women nor the poor. The story of his conversion depicts it as sudden, dramatic and is perhaps apocryphal. A pious merchant was travelling in Marw region accompanied, not in the traditional manner by a hired, protective escort, but by a professional reader of the *Qur'an*. As the caravan reached Fuzayl's ambush, the reader was loudly reciting the following verse:

> 'Is not the time yet come unto those who believe, that their hearts should humbly submit to the admonition of God?'[4]

This apparently moved Fuzayl to abandon his former life and reimburse his previous victims. Initially, he went to Kufa where he studied *Hadis* and became a disciple of Sufyan al-Sawri. Ultimately he settled in Mecca, spending all his time in prayer and fasting. It was with great reluctance that he allowed Harun al-Rashid, the Caliph, to visit him. When he finally came, Fuzayl urged him to rule with justice and reminded him that on the Resurrection Day God would question him concerning every single Muslim under his protection, and would exact justice for each of

[1]For his life see Sulami, pp. 80–7; Abu Nu'aim, VIII, pp. 73–84; Qushairi, p. 17; Ibn al-'Imad, II, pp. 87–8; Nicholson, p. 115; Arberry, pp. 150–52. [2]Nicholson, p. 121.

[3]For notes on his biography see Sulami, pp. 93–7; Abu Nu'aim, X, pp. 42–3; Qushairi, p. 17; Nicholson, pp. 119–21; Arberry, pp. 173–78. [4]*Qur'an*, LVI, 16.

them. If one night an old woman had gone to sleep in her house without provisions of any kind, at the Last Judgement she would pluck the Caliph's gown and give evidence against him.[1] Fuzayl died in Mecca[2] in 187/803.

Among Marw's other leading sufi saints, was Abu 'Abdu'r Rahman 'Abdu'llah ibn al-Mubarak al-Hanzali. Born in 118/736–37 of a Turkic father and an Iranian mother, al-Hanzali became a very rich merchant, but he also studied under many teachers in Marw and elsewhere. One story about him is as follows:

> 'He was in love with a girl, and one night in winter he stationed himself at the foot of the wall of her house, while she came on to the roof, and they both stayed gazing at each other until daybreak. When 'Abdu'llah heard the call to morning prayers he thought it was time for evening prayers; and only when the sun began to shine did he discover that he had spent the whole night in rapturous contemplation of his beloved. He took warning by this, and said to himself: "Shame on thee...Dost thou stand on foot all night for thine own pleasure, and yet become furious when the Imam reads a long chapter of the *Qur'an*?"'[3]

Al-Hanzali built two hospices (*ribats*) at Marw, one for traditionists and the other for jurisprudents. In alternate years he would perform a *hajj*, and go to war, and during the third year, he would engage in commerce, distributing his profits to the poor. A conversation between al-Hanzali and a Christian monk tells something of sufi discipline:

> 'I saw a Christian monk (*rahib*), who was emaciated by self-mortification and bent double by fear of God. I asked him to tell me the way to God. He answered, "If you knew God, you would know the way to Him." Then he said, "I worship Him although I do not know him whereas you disobey Him although you know Him," that is, "knowledge entails fear, yet I see that you are confident; and infidelity entails ignorance, yet I feel fear within myself." I laid this to heart, and it restrained me from many ill deeds.'[4]

Al-Hanzali died at Hit on the Euphrates in 181/797. Of the several books he wrote, one on asceticism has survived.[5]

Abu Nasr Bishr ibn al al-Haris al-Hafi was another prominent sufi in

[1]Nicholson, p. 100.

[2]For notes on his biography see Sulami, pp. 7-12; Abu Nu'aim, VIII, pp. 84–139; Qushairi, p. 9; al-Yafe'i, I, pp. 415–17; Ibn Hajar, VIII, pp. 294–97; Nicholson, pp. 97–100; Arberry, pp. 52-61.

[3]Nicholson, p. 96.

[4]ibid, pp. 96–7.

[5]For notes on his biography see Al-Nu'aim, VIII, pp. 162–90, Ibn Hajar, V, pp. 382–87; Ibn al-'Imad, I, pp. 295–97, Nicholson, pp. 95–7; Arberry, pp. 124–28.

Marw. In his youth he was an alcoholic. Once while staggering along the road, he picked up a piece of paper on which was written: 'In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.' Bishr deposited it reverently in his house. The same night God visited him in a dream, extending His approval. This prompted Bishr to turn to asceticism. He became an associate of Fuzayl and a disciple of his own maternal uncle. Bishr's renunciation of the world involved complete destitution and this included walking barefooted. During his lifetime, Bishr reminded all those who wished to be both honoured in this world and exalted in the next to shun three things: asking a boon of anyone, speaking ill of anyone and accepting an invitation for food from anyone. He distinguished three types of poor:

1. those who neither begged nor accepted anything, yet received everything they asked for from God;
2. those who did not beg but accepted what they were given; and
3. those who held out for as long as they could, but then begged.

Poverty, according to Bishr, was to be borne with patience and charity. The highest spiritual merit was earned by doing service to mankind. He accordingly advised pilgrims to Mecca to give their money to an orphan or to a poor man and thus earn more religious merit and spiritual satisfaction. To him pilgrimage was the *jihad* of women.

Although Bishr did not himself marry, he never preached against family life.[1] Retiring to Baghdad, Bishr[2] died in 227/841–42.

An indelible mark was left on the people of Marw by Abu'l-'Abbas Qasim bin al-Mahdi al-Sayyari. Although he died there in 342/953–54, for centuries his tomb at Marw was visited by devotees. According to him unification with God involved the complete absence of any other thoughts but God. His explanation of the doctrine of *jama'* (union) and *tafriqa* (separation) deeply influenced later sufis. According to al-Sayyari: 'Union is that which He unites by His attributes and separation is that which He separates by His acts.' This involved a cessation of human effort and an affirmation of the divine will to the exclusion of all personal initiative. *Jama'* did not involve the mingling (*imtizaj*) of God with created beings or God-made objects (*ittihad*) with His own works or His becoming incarnate (*hall*) in things.[3]

Nakhshab, in the province of Sughd, or ancient Sogdiana, between the Oxus and Jaxartes, was the home of the eighth century adventurer known as al-Muqanna', the Veiled Prophet of Khurasan. Moreover, it

[1]*Encyclopaedia of Islam* (new edition), I, pp. 1244–246.

[2]For notes on his biography see Abu Nu'aim, VIII, pp. 336–60; Qushairi, pp. 11–2; al-Yafe'i, II, pp. 92–4; Ibn Hajar, I, pp. 444–45; Ibn al-'Imad, pp. 60–62; Nicholson, pp. 105–06; Arberry, pp. 80–6.

[3]Nicholson, pp. 157–58, 251–60.

was an important centre of sufism. Abu Turab Askar bin al-Husain al-Nasafi of Nakshab was an associate of Hatim-i Asamm. According to him a dervish did not choose his own food or dress, for his nourishment was ecstasy and his clothing was piety. Abu Turab[1] died in 245/859–60.

Close to Nakhshab was Tirmiz,[2] north of the passage of the Oxus leading from Balkh. Tirmiz was the greatest emporium of goods coming from the north to Khurasan. The most eminent saint of Tirmiz was Abu 'Abdu'llah Muhammad ibn 'Ali bin al-Husain al-Hakim al-Tirmizi. The impact of Tirmizi's theories on saints and sainthood which extended from Ghazali of Tus to Ibn al-'Arabi of Spain is some indication of the scope of his influence. Tirmizi was the associate of sufis such as Abu Turab Nakhshabi and Ahmad ibn Khazruya, an outstanding scholar of *Hadis*, *Fiqh* and Qura'nic exegesis. Among his works the most famous are the *Khatm al-Awliya'* (Seal of Saints), the *Kitab al-Nahj* (Book of the Highway), the *Nawadir al-Usul* (Choice Principles), the *Kitab al-Tawhid* (Book of the Unification) and the *Kitab 'Azab al-Qabr* (Book of the Torment of the Grave).

Ibrahim al-Geyoushi, a modern authority on Tirmizi, asserts, that two themes which recur in all Tirmizi's writings are: 'a detailed elucidation of the ways to sainthood, and the description of the struggle between the desire of the carnal soul and the longing of the heart.' 'His conception of sainthood and saints, their "degrees" (of rank as well as perfection) which constitute a fully developed hierarchy, their 'seal', and their relationship, with the prophets are, as laid down in the *Khatm al-Awliya'* 'The Seal of the Saints' basic for sufi thought.'[3] Thus Tirmizi divides sainthood into two categories: (a) general, as common to and exhibited by all believers; and (b) special, whereby the saints achieve trustworthiness in the eyes of God. The latter category is further divided into two. The *Awliya' Haqq-Allah* literally (Saints of Duty towards God) are engaged in an unending struggle against the carnal soul until they are illuminated by God's light and receive grace. At the same time they retain this light as a guide along the way, while He absorbs the spirit of closeness in the wider sphere of *Tawhid*. Those who attain the second stage are known as *Wali-Allah* (Saints of God). Scrupulous observance of the rules, perseverance and patience in obedience lead to the attainment of the status of *Wali-Allah*.

In short, purity, goodness, spiritual wealth, strength, and immunity from evil are the *sine qua non* of this stage. Tirmizi quotes the following *Hadis* to support his theory:

'The best way for My servant to draw near to Me is through regularity

[1]*NU*, pp. 51-2; Nicholson, pp. 121-22.

[2]Guy Le Strange, *The lands of the eastern Caliphate*, London, 1966, pp. 439-43, 469-72.

[3]M.I. Al-Geyoushi', 'Al-Tirmidhi's theory of Saints and Sainthood, *Islamic Quarterly*, XV; no. 1, London, January-March, 1971, p. 18.

> in his religious duties, and continual striving for My proximity by works of supererogation until I grant him My love. When I love him I will be his hearing, his sight, his tongue, his hand, his leg, and his heart. None of these limbs can do anything but by my guidance.'[1]

To Tirmizi the highest rungs on the ladder of sainthood are *al-budala*,[2] *al-siddiqin* (or *al-umana*),[3] *al-muhaddasun*,[4] and *Khatm al-Awliya'*, in order of increasing precedence. The last rung is for one who was the seal of the saints, just as the Prophet Muhammad was the seal of the prophets. The rightful place of the *Khatm al-Awliya'* was before God in the Kingdom of Oneness.[5] Tirmizi clearly acknowledges the superiority of the prophets over the saints: 'the prophets were saints of God before they became prophets; hence they possess both qualities, prophethood and sainthood. Nobody is their equal.'[6] All eminent saints are conscious of the quality of sainthood inherent in themselves. 'The purified heart of a pious man in which there is no sin, nor aggression, nor ill-will, nor spite,' says Tirmizi 'leads to sainthood.' Saints understand both the future and what is hidden from ordinary men, and Tirmizi is inclined to ascribe miraculous powers unreservedly to those who are outstanding. He says:

> 'It is possible for saints to work miracles. The occurrence of miracles inspires in others the belief in the genuineness of the sainthood. When a miracle becomes manifest it is a sign of true sainthood. The miracle is both the proof of this genuineness and its result, for it is the saint's genuineness that enables him to work miracles.'[7]

According to Tirmizi the conduct of prophets and saints is immaculate. He sees no reason preventing saints from equalling, and even surpassing the early Caliphs, Abu Bakr and 'Umar. Tirmizi expresses the idea in the following way:

> 'Who can prevent the mercy of God from prevailing over people even in these modern times? Nobody can check it, for it is continuous. Do they think that there is no *siddiq*, no *muqarrab*, no *mujtaba*, no *mustafa* nowadays? Is it not known that the *Mahdi*[8] will come

[1]M.I. Al-Geyoushi', 'Al-Tirmidhi's theory of Saints and Sainthood', *Islamic Quarterly*, XV, no. 1, London, January-March, 1971, p. 21.

[2]They are forty in number and surround the divine throne.

[3]The honest or trusted ones. They have offered their souls to God, and He has rewarded them with His light; they also number forty.

[4]These are the *sadat al-awliya'*, 'masters of the saints'.

[5]ibid, pp. 23–5. [6]ibid, p. 26. [7]ibid, p. 33.

[8]Literally, guided or rightly guided, but according to Sunni traditions, he is the leader who is expected to rise before judgement day. Ibn Khaldun gives all the important traditions on the subject and adds: 'It has been well known (and generally accepted) by all Muslims in every epoch, that at the end of time a man from the family (of the Prophet) will without

> towards the end of the world? Is it not said that the Seal of Saints will also come, and will bear witness on the Day of Judgement that all the saints are recipients of the mercy of God?[1]

Tirmizi, however, reminds all saints that knowledge of the nature of lordship (*rububiyya*) depends on possessing the proper principles of servantship (*'ubudiyya*); 'Anyone who is ignorant of the nature of servantship. . .is yet more ignorant of the nature of lordship. . .'.

Tirmizi's teachings brought him into conflict with the authorities of his own town; he retired to Nishapur where he died some time after[2] 285/898.

Nishapur was the leading trade centre of Khurasan and featured a daily traffic of caravans. Sacked by the Ghuzz Turks in the middle of the twelfth century, and again by the Mongols in the middle of the thirteenth, its economic recovery was meteoric.

The struggle between the Shi'is and the Sunnis, particularly the dominant Karrami Sunnis, was an interesting feature of the religious, political and social history of Nishapur. But the most colourful aspects of life in the town were those connected with the sufi movement.

The most outstanding of the early generations of sufis in Nishapur was Abu Hafs 'Amr bin Salama al-Haddad. By profession a blacksmith, he was converted to sufism through an encounter with a Jew. Abu Hafs 'Amr visited Baghdad where he is said to have amazed his fellow sufis with his eloquent Arabic. He died in his home town in 265/879.[3]

The founder of a unique path in sufism was Abu Salih Hamdun bin Ahmad bin 'Umara al-Qassar, also of Nishapur. He was an eminent theologian and jurist. He died in 271/884–85.

The path of Hamdun was that of *malamat* (blame). He affirmed that *malamat* was the abandonment of all concern for one's welfare. If the worshipper intentionally abandoned the source or his own well-being and embarked on a path of permanent misfortune, renouncing all pleasure, God's glory might be revealed to him, and the more he became

fail make his appearance, one who will strengthen the religion and make justice triumph. The Muslims will follow him, and he will gain domination over the Muslim realm. He will be called the Mahdi. Following him, the Antichrist will appear, together with all the subsequent signs of the hour (the day of judgement), as established in (the sound tradition of) the *Sahih*. After (the Mahdi), 'Isa (Jesus) will descend and kill the Antichrist. Or Jesus will descend together with the Mahdi and help him kill (the Antichrist), and have him as the leader in his prayers.' Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, English translation by F. Rosenthal, New York, 1958, pp. 156-200. For the Mahdavi movement in India *see* S.A.A. Rizvi, *Muslim revivalist movements in northern India*, pp. 68-134.

[1]'Al-Tirmidhi's Theory of 'Saints and Sainthood , p. 37.

[2]For a note on his biography see Sulami, pp. 212-15; Abu Nu'aim, X, pp. 233-35; Qushairi, p. 24; Massignon, pp. 256-64; Nicholson, pp. 141-42, 210-41; Arberry, pp. 243-49.

[3]For notes on his biography see Sulami, pp. 105-13; Abu Nu'aim, V. pp. 229-30; Qushairi, p. 18; Nicholson, pp. 123-35; Arberry, pp. 192-98.

separated from mankind, the more he was united with God. Blame had a great effect in making love sincere. Hujwiri sums it up like this:

> 'In true love there is nothing sweeter than blame, because blame of the Beloved makes no impression on the lover's heart: he heeds not what strangers say, for his heart is ever faithful to the object of his love.'
> "'Tis sweet to be reviled for passion's sake."[1]

Among the sufis of Nishapur Abu 'Usman Sa'id bin Isma'il al-Hiri also rose to a considerable degree of importance. He originally came from Rayy, and at some time had lived with both Yahya ibn Mu'az al-Razi and Shah Shuja' of Kirman. Al-Hiri's associations with Yahya perfected in him the 'station' of hope, those with Shah Shuja' inculcated in him jealousy, but his discipleship under Abu Hafs' perfected him in affection. He died at Nishapur in 298/910–11.[2]

Abu Zakariya' Yahya ibn Mu'az al-Razi whose original home was at Rayy (near Tehran) finally chose Balkh for his activities as a sufi preacher. Having acquired considerable wealth from trading, he wished to return to Rayy. After losing everything in a robbery he settled in Nishapur. He was a poet and is reported to have written many books although none have survived. Yahya died in Nishapur in 258/871–72.[3]

Of all the Khurasan sufis, the most well-known is Abu Yazid Tayfur ibn 'Isa ibn Surushan of Bastam (Bistam), better known as Bayazid. His grandfather had been a Zoroastrian and his father a leading citizen of Bastam. After completing a formal religious education, he took to wandering from country to country while continuing ascetic pursuits such as indulging in continuous vigils and hunger fasts. It is said that he met one hundred and thirteen spiritual teachers during his thirty years of roaming. This would, however, seem to be based on legend, for according to his most authentic biographers, Abu Yazid spent most of his time in Bastam, where he died in 261/874 or 264/877–78. Only for a short period was he forced to hide because of the enmity of orthodox elements in Bastam.

Junaid of Baghdad believed that Abu Yazid ranked greatest among the sufis as did Gabriel amongst the angels.

Abu Yazid himself believed that God had delivered him out of the darkness of the carnal soul and the foulness of a fleshy nature. Bayazid believed that when God perceived that his qualities had been annihilated in His own attributes, He bestowed on him the name of His own presence

[1]Nicholson, pp. 67, 125–26; *NU*, p. 60.

[2]Sulami, pp. 159–65; Abu Nu'aim, X, pp. 244–66; Qushairi, p. 21; Nicholson, pp. 132–33; Arberry, pp. 231–35.

[3]Al-Khatib, XV, pp. 208–12; Abu Nu'aim, X, pp. 51–70; Qushairi, p. 17; Nicholson, pp. 122–23; Arberry, pp. 179–82; Massignon, pp. 238–41.

and addressed him with His own Selfhood. Singleness became manifest; duality vanished. Ritter sums up Abu Yizid's teachings as follows:

> 'Abu Yazid was, in contrast..with the later sufis Abu Ishaq al-Kaziruni and Abu Sa'id bin Abi'l Khayr, a wholly introvert sufi. He did not exercise, as they did, a social activity (*khidmat al-fuqara'*), yet was ready to save humanity, by vicarious suffering, from hell... The "numinous" sense is extremely highly developed in him, together with a sense of horror and awe before the Deity, in whose presence he always felt himself an unbeliever, just about to lay aside the girdle of the magians (*zunnar*). His passionate aspiration is aimed at absolutely freeing himself through systematic work upon himself ("I was the smith of my own self": *haddad nafui*), of all obstacles separating him from God (*hujub*), with the object of "attaining to Him." He describes this process in extremely interesting auto-biographical sayings with partly grandiose images. The "world" (*dunya*), "flight from the world" (*zuhd*), "worship of God" (*'ibadat*), miracles (*karamat*), *zikr*, even the mystic stages (*maqamat*) are for him no more than so many barriers holding him from God. When he has finally shed his "I" in *fana'* "as snakes their skin" and reached the desired stage, his changed self-consciousness is expressed in those famous hybrid utterances (*shatahat*) which so scandalized and shocked his contemporaries: "*Subhani*! *Ma a'zama sha'ni*"—"Glory be to me! How great is My Majesty!"; "Thy obedience to me is greater than my obedience to Thee"; "I am the throne and the foot-stool"; "I am the Well-preserved Tablet"; "I saw the Ka'ba walking round me"; and so on. In meditation he made flights into the supersensible world; these earned him the censure that he claimed to have experienced a *mi'raj* in the same way as the Prophet. He was in the course of them decorated by God with His Singleness (*wahdaniyya*) and clothed with His 'I-ness' (*ananiyya*), but shrank from showing himself in that state to men; or flew with the wings of everlastingness (*daymumiyya*) through the air of 'no-quality' (*la-kayfiyya*) to the ground of eternity (*azaliyya*) and saw the tree on 'One-ness' (*ahadiyya*), to realise that "all that was illusion" or that it "was himself" who was all that, etc. In such utterances he appears to have reached the ultimate problem of all mysticism.'[1]

Abu Yazid's theory of *fana'* or the total destruction of the empirical self in God is not the only point of similarity between his teachings and those of the Upanishads. His advocacy of understanding of the controlled use of breath was also Indian. Some hagiologists suggest that Bayazid learnt the doctrine of *fana'* from his teacher Abu 'Ali Sindi. Among modern scholars Nicholson and R.C. Zaehner support this theory, while

[1]*Encyclopaedia of Islam* (new edition), I, pp. 162–63.

Arberry rejects it. The latter provides evidence to prove that Sind was a village in Khurasan and not the province of Sind in modern Pakistan. The controversy is insignificant because ancient Indian thought and ideas on mysticism had continually aroused interest in the Khurasanian region and these naturally fused with Bayazid's expression of his own mystical experiences.[1]

Other parts of Iran

There were other areas of Iran which, like Khurasan and Transoxiana, were also famous for their sufis. We have already mentioned some dervishes from Rayy, who settled in Nishapur. Amongst the Rayy sufis was Abu Ya'qub Yusuf ibn al-Husain who obtained an education in Arabia and Egypt but returned to preach in his home town where he remained until he died in 304/916–17. It seems apparent that the people of Rayy had little interest in esoteric doctrines and Yusuf's lectures generally failed to attract an audience.[2]

Kirman, in the Fars region, came to be distinguished in the history of sufism because of Abu'l Fawaris Shah ibn Shuja', said to have been a scion of a princely family. He was the author of several books on sufism, none of which have survived. Hujwiri records an interesting sentence Abu'l Fawaris is reported to have expressed, and makes the following comment:

> '"The eminent have eminence until they see it, and the saints have saintship until they see it," that is, whoever regards his eminence loses its reality, and whoever regards his saintship loses its reality."'[3]

At Shiraz, also in Iran, Abu 'Abdu'llah Muhammad ibn Khafif ibn Isfakshad was born in 270/882. Like Abu'l Fawaris he was of royal blood, but for him the prayer carpet was infinitely preferable to the coronet. Not only was he well connected, but 'Abdu'llah's fame as a mystic made him exceedingly eligible as a marriage prospect to the daughters of kings and nobles. Marriage to him was considered a great prize because of the blessing accruing from it. 'Abdu'llah did not choose one wife but many, and is said to have contracted four hundred marriages. These were not consummated and were generally later annulled. Two or three of his wives, however, would rotate in performing service for their husband, but only one, a vizier's daughter, is recorded as having endeared herself to

[1]Al-Sahlaji, *Kitab al-Nur* edited by A. Badawi, Cairo, 1949; Sulami, pp. 60–64; Abu Nu'aim, X, pp. 33–40; Qushairi, p. 14; Nicholson, pp. 106–08, 184–88; Massignon, pp. 243–56; Arberry, pp. 100–23; R.C. Zaehner, *Hindu and Muslim mysticism*, London, 1960, pp. 93–134, 198–218; A.J. Arberry, *Revelation and reason in Islam*, London, 1957, pp. 90–103.

[2]Sulami, pp. 175–82; Abu Nu'aim, X, pp. 238–42; al-Khatib, XIV, pp. 314–19; Qushairi, p. 24; Nicholson, p. 136; Arberry, pp. 185–91.

[3]Nicholson, p. 138. For his biography see Sulami, pp. 192–94; Arberry, pp. 183–91.

'Abdu'llah. She described her relations with the Shaikh as follows:

'"When the Shaikh wedded me and I was informed that he would visit me that night, I prepared a fine repast and adorned myself assiduously. As soon as he came and the food was brought in, he called me to him and looked for a while first at me and then at the food. Then he took my hand and drew it into his sleeve. From his breast to his navel there were fifteen knots (*'aqd*) growing out of his belly. He said, "Ask me what these are," so I asked him and he replied, "They are knots made by the tribulation and anguish of my abstinence in renouncing a face like this and viands like these." He said no more, but departed; and that is all my intimacy with him."'[1]

'Abdu'llah made pilgrimages to Mecca at least six times, and visited Egypt and Asia Minor, finally dying at Shiraz in 371/982. He was the author of many books in which he constantly discussed the two doctrines of *ghaybat* (absence) and *huzur* (presence).

'"Presence" is "presence of the heart," as a proof of intuitive faith (*yaqin*), so that what is hidden from it has the same force as what is visible to it. "Absence" is "absence of the heart from all things except God" to such an extent that it becomes absent from itself and absent even from its absence, so that it no longer regards itself; and the sign of this state is withdrawal from all formal authority (*hukm-i rusum*), as when a prophet is divinely preserved from what is unlawful. Accordingly, absence from one's self is presence with God, and vice versa.'[2]

From Tustar, or Ahwaz, in Khuzistan rose the celebrated sufi, Abu 'Abdu'llah Muhammad Sahl ibn 'Abdu'llah al-Tustari. He was born in *c.* 200/815 and studied first with Sufyan al-Sawri and later with Zu'n-Nun Misri. Although a withdrawn ascetic, persecution by the orthodox forced Sahl to take refuge in Basra.

It was in Basra that Sahl formulated his ideas on the course of one concerned with the mystic path. Unlike other sufis who believed that mortification was needed to redress the vices of the lower soul, Sahl saw self-punishment in the positive terms of leading directly to union with God. Orthodox divines accused him of combining the Law (*Shari'a*) and Truth (*Haqiqa*) but to Sahl they were never divided. In this passage from the *Kashfu al-Mahjub* he says:

[1]Nicholson, pp. 248–49.
[2]ibid, p. 248; A.M. Schimmel Tari, *Ibn al-Khafif*, Ankara, 1955; Abu Nu'aim, X, pp. 385–87; Qushairi, p. 31; Nicholson, pp. 158, 247–51; Arberry, pp. 257–63.

> 'Inasmuch as God has joined the Law to the Truth, it is impossible that His saints should separate them. If they be separated, one must inevitably be rejected and the other accepted. Rejection of the Law is heresy, and rejection of the Truth is infidelity and polytheism. Any (proper) separation between them is made, not to establish a difference of meaning, but to affirm the Truth, as when it is said: "The words, *there is no God save Allah*, are Truth, and the words, *Muhammad is* the *Apostle of Allah*, are Law." No one can separate the one from the other without impairing his faith, and it is vain to wish to do so. In short, the Law is a branch of the Truth: knowledge of God is Truth, and obedience to His command is Law.'[1]

Like Rabi'a, Sahl had a special affinity with animals. According to tradition, wild beasts and lions would come from the forests to his house where he would feed them. Sahl died in Basra in 282/896.[2]

Egypt and Syria

The prominence which Egyptian sufism obtained was due mainly to the contribution of Abu'l-Faiz Sauban ibn Ibrahim al-Misri, or Zu'n-Nun. A native of Ikhmim in Upper Egypt, he was born about 180/796. He made a study of medicine and alchemy and may have been influenced by Hellenistic ideas. Zu'n-Nun travelled extensively in Arabia and Syria. In 214/829 he was accused of heresy, arrested and sent to Baghdad. After examination the Caliph had him released and permitted him to return to Egypt. He died at Jiza in 246/860–61.

The controversy around Zu'n-Nun stemmed from his conception of the mystic states (*ahwal*) and the stations (*maqamat*) of the mystic way; he was the first to attempt a detailed explanation of these two ideas. Considering self to be the chief obstacle to all spiritual progress, Zu'n-Nun advocated sincerity in the search for righteousness, and that solitude alone led to success in this quest. He was the first to teach the real nature of gnosis (*ma'rifa*) and described it as:

> '...knowledge of the attributes of the Unity, and this belongs to the saints, those who contemplate the Face of God within their hearts, so that God reveals Himself to them in a way in which He is not revealed to any others in the world. "The gnostics are not themselves, but in so far as they exist at all they exist in God."'

Zu'n-Nun's explanation of gnosis has been interpreted in the following way:

[1]Nicholson, pp. 139–40.
[2]Sulami, pp. 199–205; Abu Nu'aim, pp. 189–212; Qushairi, p. 15; Nicholson, pp. 139–40, 195–210; L. Massignon, pp. 264–70; Arberry, pp. 153–60.

> 'The gnostic needs no state, he needs only his Lord in all states. Gnosis he associates with ecstasy (*wajd*), the bewilderment of discovery. (Zu'n-Nun) used the word *hubb* for love to God, which means, he says, to love what God loves and to hate what God hates. But the love of God must not exclude love to man, for love to mankind is the foundation of righteousness. He is one of the first to use the imagery of the wine of love and the cup poured out for the lover to drink.'[1]

The description of the saints which Zu'n-Nun imparted to the 'Abbasid, Caliph Mutawakkil (847–61), is preserved by his admirer al-Muhasibi in the following words:

> '. . . they are those whom God invested with the radiance of His love and adorned with the fair mantle of His grace, upon whose heads He set the crown of His joy, and He put love towards them into the hearts of His creatures. Then He brought them forth, having entrusted to their hearts the treasures of the Invisible, which depend upon union with the Beloved. . . He gave them knowledge of the places where the means of healing is to be found. . . and to them He gave assurance of an answer to their prayers, and He said: "Oh My saints, if there come to you one sick through separation from Me, heal him, or a fugitive from Me, seek him out. . . or afraid of Me, then reassure him. . . O My saints, I have reasoned with you, and to you I have addressed Myself, towards you has been My desire and from you have I sought the fulfilment (of my Will), for upon you has My choice been laid, and you have I predestined for My work. . . to be Mine elect. Not those who are proud do I seek to be My servants, nor do I desire the service of the covetous. To you have I given the most precious of rewards, the fairest of gifts, the greatest of graces. I am the Searcher of hearts, He Who knows the mysteries of the Invisible. . . I am the Goal of your desire, I Who read the secrets of the heart. Let not the voice of any that is mighty, save Myself, make you fear, nor any sovereign by Myself. . . He who has shown you enmity is My enemy, and to him who was friendly towards you have I shewn friendship. Ye are My saints and ye are My beloved. Ye are Mine and I am yours.'[2]

Syria was notable not only for its prophets but also for its saints. Abu Sulaiman 'Abdu'r-Rahman bin Atiyya al-Darani, a sufi who remained for some time in Basra, later retired to Daraya, near Damascus, where he

[1] *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (new edition), II, p. 242.

[2] *An early mystic of Baghdad*, pp. 81-2; For notes on his biography, see Sulami, pp. 23-32; al-Khatib, VIII, pp. 393-97; Qushairi, p. 9; Ibn Asakar, *Tarikh Demashq*, Damascus, 1329-32/1911-13. Nicholson, pp. 100-03; Massignon, pp. 184-91; Arberry, pp. 87-99.

died in 215/830. To him, both hope and fear were indispensable to one who sought God. Nothing, either in this world nor the next, was of sufficient importance to keep man from his God. Abu Sulaiman 'Abdu'r-Rahman believed:

> 'When hope predominates over fear, one's "time" is spoilt, because "time" is the preservation of one's state (*hal*), which is preserved only so long as one is possessed by fear. If, on the other hand, fear predominates over hope, belief in Unity (*Tawhid*) is lost, inasmuch as excessive fear springs from despair, and despair of God is polytheism (*shirk*). Accordingly, the maintenance of belief in Unity consists in right hope, and the maintenance of "time" in right fear, and both are maintained when hope and fear are equal. Maintenance of belief in Unity makes one a believer (*mu'min*), while maintenance of "time" makes one pious (*muti'*). Hope is connected entirely with contemplation (*mushahadat*), in which is involved a firm conviction (*i'tiqad*); and fear is connected entirely with purgation (*mujahadat*), in which is involved an anxious uncertainty (*iztirab*).'[1]

Baghdad

Baghdad, the 'Abbasid capital in Iraq, situated on the Khurasan road, was a junction of caravan routes. There foundations of sufism were laid amidst hectic orthodox, intellectual and sectarian developments. From the ninth century onwards translations of Greek, old Persian and Sanskrit literature were accompanied by those of Syriac (ancient Syrian or western Aramaic) works by Christian mystics into Arabic. Of these the most notable was the translation of *Mystic Treatises* written by Isaac of Nineveh in the seventh century. Syriac works by mystics such as Aphraates, the monk, who lived in Iran during the fourth century, Ephraim, the Syrian, also of the fourth century, Simon of Taibutheh, an East Syrian who died in 680, and Abraham bar Dashandad, an East Syrian, who lived sometime around 720 and 730, were also known to sufis in Baghdad.

It was an Irani, however, who founded the Baghdad school of Islamic mystics. He was Abu Mahfuz Ma'ruf ibn Firuz al-Karkhi. Although Ma'ruf was born of Christian parents, he reportedly embraced Islam through the influence of the eighth Shi'i Imam 'Ali al-Riza. This story must be apocryphal for 'Ali al-Riza, who was born in Medina in 148/765, was summoned to Marw by Caliph al-Ma'mun (813–33) in 201/816 and was killed at Tus, two years later in 818. Long before the arrival of 'Ali al-Riza in Iran, Ma'ruf had settled in Baghdad, where he died in 200/815–16. It is unlikely that the latter would have gone to Medina in order to

[1]Nicholson, pp. 112-13; For biographical notes on Abu Sulaiman see Sulami, pp. 68-79; Qushairi, p. 16.

embrace Islam. According to one source, Ma'ruf completed his education in mystic and ascetic discipline under Abu Sulaiman Dawud ibn Nusair al-Ta'i of Kufa who died between 160/777 and 165/782. During Harun al-Rashid's reign, Ma'ruf lived in the Karkh quarters of Baghdad, hence he was subsequently called Karkhi.

The two elements of *Haqq* (Truth) and *Sidq* (Truthfulness) predominate in Ma'ruf's teaching. When asked for his last testament, Ma'ruf said that his shirt might be taken from his back and given in alms so that he could leave the world naked as he had emerged from his mother's womb. After his death, Jews, Christians and Muslims all claimed Ma'ruf as their own, but only Muslims were able to lift his bier from the ground before his burial. The following anecdote also confirms Ma'ruf's religious tolerance:

> 'It was reported that whenever food was presented to Ma'ruf as a gift he always accepted and ate it. Someone said to him: "Your brother Bishr bin al-Haris always refused such food," and Ma'ruf replied: "Abstaining causes my brother's hands to be tied, whilst Gnosis causes my hands to be stretched forth. I am only a guest in the house of my Lord... when He feeds me, I eat; when he does not, I have to be patient. I have neither objection nor choice."'[1]

Ma'ruf's pupil, Abu'l-Hasan Sari ibn al-Mughallis al-Saqti, rose to be most prominent Baghdadi sufi. Among his main opponents was the celebrated jurist, Ahmad ibn Hanbal (780–855), the founder of the puritanically orthodox Sunni school of jurisprudence, called Hanbali. Originally Sari had been a merchant of spices and seasonings. During his lifetime he witnessed the reigns of several Caliphs and the rise and fall of several significant intellectual and sectarian movements. In 253/867–68 he died at the ripe old age of ninety-eight.

According to the *Tabaqat al-Sufiyya*, Sari was the 'first in Baghdad to teach unification (*Tawhid*) through the path of mysticism, the first to teach the knowledge of Reality, and he was also the leader of the Baghdadis in the use of symbolic utterances (*isharat*).' A great teacher, he chose the Socratic method of instruction through the posing of thought-provoking questions. Sari's influence converted the Baghdad school of sufism into a group known as the Masters of Unification (*Arbab al-Tawhid*). Their theories were based on academic knowledge and their approach to mysticism was intellectual.

Sufism, Sari said, meant to a sufi the following three things:

> '...that the light of his gnosis did not extinguish the light of his

[1] *Qut al-Qulub*, IV, p. 61; quoted by A.H. Abdel-Kadar, *The life, personality and writings of Al-Junayd*, London, 1962, p. 15; for biographical details about Ma'ruf see Sulami, pp. 74–9; Abu Nu'aim, VIII, pp. 360–68; Qushairi, p. 10; Nicholson, pp. 113–15; Arberry, pp. 161–65.

> abstinence (*wara'*), that his inward speculations did not make him opposed to the outward conduct taught by the Qur'an and the Sunna, and that the favours of God bestowed on him did not lead him to tear aside the veil from what God had made unlawful to him.'[1]

Sari also reminded his fellow sufis that the very start of gnosis depended on the withdrawal of the soul that it might be alone with God. Junaid describes one of Sari's dreams in which he saw God speaking to him in these words:

> 'O Sari, I created mankind, and all of them claimed to love Me. Then I created the world, and nine-tenths of them deserted Me, and there remained one-tenth. Then I created Paradise, and nine-tenths again deserted Me, and one-tenth of the tenth remained with Me. And I imposed upon them one particle of affliction, and nine-tenths of those who were left deserted Me, and I said to those who remained, "Ye did not desire the world, nor seek after Paradise, nor flee from misfortune; what then do ye desire and what is it that ye seek?" They replied, "It is Thou Thyself that we desire, and if Thou dost afflict us, yet will we not abandon our love and devotion to Thee." And I said to them, "I am He who imposes upon you affliction and terrors which even the mountains cannot abide. Will ye have patience for such affliction?" They said, "Yea, verily, if Thou art the One Who afflicts; do what Thou wilt with us." These are indeed My servants and My true lovers.'[2]

Among the associates of Sari and Zu'n-Nun, probably the most talented was Abu Sa'id Ahmad ibn 'Isa al-Kharraz of Baghdad. Kharraz was a cobbler by trade. He acquired great fame because of his books, some of which have survived. In his writings he gave a clear and convincing definition of *fana'* (annihilation or the passing away of human attributes) and *baqa'* (subsistence or existence in God). Bayazid's statements regarding *fana'* emanated from a state of mystic intoxication but Kharraz's arguments were made in the most temperate language.

To mystics and spiritualists, *fana'* meant different things. One view was that of the Nestorians who held that Mary, through self-mortification, annihilated all human qualities. Divine subsistence then became attached to her, so that she existed in God's life, and Jesus was the result of this union. Originally human elements were not attached to Jesus because his existence arose from an understanding of the subsistence of God. Consequently, Jesus, His mother and God exist through one subsistence, which is both eternal and one of God's attributes. Kharraz,

[1]Qushairi, p. 10; extract translated in *An early mystic of Baghdad*, p. 39.

[2]*An early mystic of Baghdad*, p. 40; For biographical details see Sulami, pp. 41-8; Abu Nu'aim, X, pp. 116-26; Qushairi, pp. 10-11; Nicholson, pp. 110-11; Arberry, pp. 166-72.

however, held that *fana'* is annihilation of the consciousness of manhood (*'ubudiyya*), and *baqa'* (subsistence) is subsistence in the contemplation of God (*Ilahiyya*). Hujwiri comments:

> 'In annihilation there is no love or hate, and in subsistence there is no consciousness of union or separation. Some wrongly imagine that annihilation signifies loss of essence and destruction of personality, and that subsistence indicates the subsistence of God in Man; both these notions are absurd.'[1]

Kharraz's book, *the Kitab al-Sidq* (Book of Truthfulness) has been published with an English translation by A.J. Arberry. Starting with the idea of *Sidq* or Truthfulness, Kharraz continues by describing the 'stations,' or stages in the sufi path: fear, hope, trust, love, shame, longing, intimacy, all which lead to the goal of unity with God. He concludes:

> 'Know, then, that those who have attained unto God, and are near to Him, who have in truth tasted the love of God, and obtained their portion from their King, their qualities are: godliness, abstinence, patience, sincerity, truthfulness, trust, confidence, love, yearning, intimacy, all fine characteristics, all the characteristics of theirs which cannot be described, together with that piety and generosity which they have made their abode. All this is with them, dwelling in their natures, hidden in their souls: nothing else find they good, for this is their food and their habitude.'[2]

The date of Kharraz's death is uncertain, but it appears to have been sometime between 279/892 and 286/899.[3]

Amongst Sari's friends and visitors, another prominent personality was Abu 'Abdu'llah al-Haris ibn Asad al-Muhasibi. Born at Basra in 165/781–82, Muhasibi migrated to Baghdad early in his life. There he managed to acquire a perfect understanding of *Hadis* and of other theological subjects; he also obtained a good grounding in scholasticism (*Kalam*) and used the dialectic methods and terminology of the Mu'tazila to refute Mu'tazili doctrines and Shi'i beliefs. His involvement in discussions on matters which were taboo to the orthodox branded him a renegade in their eyes and he became a target of persecution to Ibn Hanbal and his followers. Muhasibi's life became so endangered that he fled to Baghdad. So secretly had his existence been kept that when he died in 243/857 only four people attended the funeral. Although the study of Muhasibi's writings was banned, succeeding generations of

[1]Nicholson, p. 243.

[2]A.J. Arberry, *The book of truthfulness*, Oxford, 1937, pp. 61-2.

[3]For biographical details see Sulami, pp. 223–28; Abu Nu'aim, X, pp. 246–49; Qushairi, p. 28; Massignon, pp. 270–73; Nicholson, pp. 143, 241–46; Arberry, pp. 218–20.

sufis recognized his deep contribution to their movement, and continued to study his works, most of which have survived. Ghazali was a firm admirer of the ideas of Muhasibi and considered him outstanding for his contribution to the study of human behaviour, in his recognition of both the inherent weakness of the soul and the evil of human action.

As a sufi Muhasibi was given the title al-Muhasibi, because of his practice of frequent self-examination while involved in the recollection of God. According to him strict abstinence (*wara'*) leading to godliness (*taqwa'*) was possible only through self examination. Contentment and patience were the significant marks of fine character. Margaret Smith writes:

> 'By relentless and unceasing self-examination he (Muhasibi) had come to know his own soul and its besetting sins; by self-discipline he had learnt to be master of his soul, to cope with its temptations and to get the better of its tendency to sin, and so, by his own unceasing striving, aided by the grace of God, without which his own efforts would have been in vain, to attain to self-purification and a state in which he had ceased to depend upon himself or the creatures, and had given himself entirely into the hands of God, merging his own personal will in the divine will, becoming empty of self in order that his soul might be open to the revelation and indwelling of God. Through the way of Purgation he had attained to Illumination and thence to the Unitive life, lived with and in God.'[1]

Muhasibi advised sufis to approach God in a spirit of shame for their lack of gratitude, concern for their shortcomings, real hope in His mercy and joy at the thought of Him. Everything which was good, either relating to thought or action, emanated from divine grace. Repeatedly he reminded sufis that the heart was the essence of the self, which, like a mirror, served its purpose only when brightly polished. Divine grace was a supernatural light illuminating the heart in the awakened state of the devotee, which was destroyed by neglect. A true ascetic should consider himself a stranger in this world and fight against temptations, avarice, envy, jealousy and backbiting to display religiosity and spiritual superiority. He quoted a phrase attributed to Christ: 'If one of you fasts, let him anoint his head and comb his hair and put collyrium on his eyes.'[2]

Repentance was the first step, believed Muhasibi, towards spiritual progress. This should be accompanied by the seeking of forgiveness for sins and by the atonement of injuries inflicted to others. Personal prayer or *munajat*, according to Muhasibi, was the finest means to get near to God. He believed:

[1] *An early mystic of Baghdad*, p. 26.
[2] ibid, p. 135.

'. . . approach God with obedient hearts, wherein is knowledge of the greatness of God Most High. . . feeling same before Him, and let that which is His due be given unto Him. . . and come near to Him with intense love towards Him, loving what He loves and abhorring what He abhors, and come unto Him with a realisation of His good gifts and His grace. . . Therefore approach God with fear lest His favours towards you should cease, and with keen shame lest you fall short in gratitude to Him. And draw near to God Most High with deep fear of Him and real hope in Him, and joy in the recollection of Him. . . And approach him with assured faith and dependence upon Him, and confidence in Him. . . with gravity of mien, with downcast eyes and humility. . . and approach God with the desire to amend your life. . . Draw near unto Him, choosing humility rather than exaltation, and preferring hardship for the sake of God rather than an easy life, and poverty to wealth and its acquirement. . . And approach Him with the continuous remembrance of death and the resurrection and the bridge of Sirat,[1] which must be crossed. All these things are to be earnestly desired by all who came before God to make entreaty of Him.'[2]

The most brilliant disciple and a close friend of Haris Muhasibi was Sari's nephew, Abu'l-Qasim al Junaid Ibn Muhammad al-Khazzaz al-Nihawandi. Some of Muhasibi's treatises contain detailed answers to questions Junaid put to his master. Junaid's father was a glass merchant. His son acquired a thorough knowledge of *Fiqh* and *Hadis*. (Junaid) refers of himself that when he left his uncle, Sari asked him to whose assembly he would go, and he replied: "To Haris al-Muhasibi." Sari then said: "Yes, go and acquire his doctrine (*'ilm*) and his method of self-training (*adab*), but leave his splitting of words in speculation (*tashqiq li'l-kalam*) and his refutation of the Mu'tazilites alone." "And when I had turned my back," adds Junaid, "I heard Sari say, May God make you a traditionist who is a sufi and not a sufi who is a traditionist"—that is, that knowledge of the traditions and the *Sunna* should come first, and then by practising asceticism and devotion he might advance in knowledge of sufism and become a sufi gnostic, but that the reverse process of trying to attain to the higher degrees of sufism without being well grounded in orthodox theology was dangerous.'[3] Junaid died in Baghdad in 298/910.

Of Junaid's works only his treatises, his *Rasa'il* (Epistles) and a series

[1]The bridge across hell, according to the *Hadis*, is thinner than a hair and sharper than a sword's edge.

[2]*An early mystic of Baghdad*, pp. 205-06; from *Wasaya* by Muhasibi. For biographical details see Sulami, pp. 49–53; Abu Nu'aim, X, pp. 73–109; al-Khatib, VIII, pp. 211–16; Qushairi, pp. 12–13; Nicholson, pp. 108–09, 176–83; Massignon, pp. 210–25; Arberry, pp. 143–45.

[3]*An early mystic of Baghdad*, p. 27, quoted from Al-Makki's *Qut al-Qulub*, I, p. 158.

of letters have survived. Together with Muhasibi, Junaid was the founder of the sober (*sahw*) school of sufism and posterity gave to him such titles of praise as *Saiyid al-Ta'ifa* (Lord of the Sect), *Ta'us al-Fuqara'* (Peacock of the Dervishes) and *Shaikh al-Masha'ikh* (Director of the Directors).

Junaid's own mystical awareness and self-concentration enabled him to draw the attention of his fellow sufis to the doctrine of *Tawhid* or Divine Unification in a most cautious manner. Although he considered *Tawhid* as utterly inexpressible and indefinable, he explained it by using *misaq* and *fana'* as examples. *Misaq* refers to the following verse in the Qur'an:

> 'And (remember) when thy Lord brought forth from the Children of Adam, from their reins, their seed, and made them testify of themselves, (saying): Am I not your Lord? They said: Yea, verily. We testify. (That was) lest ye should say at the Day of Resurrection: Lo! of this we were unaware.'[1]

Junaid interpreted this verse in the light of the Neo-Platonic doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul. Abdel-Kader ('Abdu'l Qadir) says:

> 'If we try to sum up this theory and to describe this (the) highest state of Unification which the worshipper can attain, we find that the worshipper returns to his primordial state where he has been before he was created. That is, he departs from his worldly existence, his normal human existence does not continue and hence he exists in God and is completely absorbed in Him. It is thus that the *muwahhid* can attain the real *Tawhid*. As long as he preserves his individuality he cannot attain this full state of *Tawhid*, as the continued persistence of his individuality means that something other than God is still present.'[2]

So when God creates a human being, His intention is to make him again fully One with Himself. This state explains Junaid's definition of sufism which draws attention to the fact that: '*Tasawwuf* is that God should make you die from yourself and should make you live in Him.' The successive steps which lead to Unification involve *fana'* in the following manner:

1. The obliteration of attributes, characteristics and natural qualities in your motives when you carry out your religious duties, making great efforts and doing the opposite of what you may desire, and compelling yourself to do the things which you do not wish to do.
2. The obliteration of your pursuit after pleasures and even the sensa-

[1] *Qur'an*, VII, 172.
[2] *Personality and writings of al-Junayd*, p. 79.

tion of pleasure in obedience to God's behests—so that you are exclusively His, without any intermediary means of contact.
3. The obliteration of the consciousness of having attained the vision of God at the final stage of ecstasy when God's victory over you is complete. At this stage you are obliterated and have eternal life with God, and you exist only in the existence of God because you have been obliterated. Your physical being continues but your individuality has departed.'[1]

Baqa', abiding or continuing in God, is the same state as *fana'* and the words are interchangeable. There is no implication that the worshipper in this state can become identical with God (*ittihad*); nor does it imply that by abandoning his own qualities, a soul can become part of God's attributes. Unification means 'the passing away of man's will in God's will,' or in other words the loss of human will, which 'characterizes the worldly individuality, being possessed by God and returning into the life of his eternal self in God.' Junaid continues by saying:

> 'The soul accepts the spiritual burden with its implication of suffering, seeks for its cure, and is preoccupied with that divine revelation vouchsafed to it. Consequently, it is able to look on the remote with the eye of propinquity, to be closer to God because a veil has been removed and it is no longer completely concealed.' 'Though the soul has *Bala'* (suffering), it is not rejected. How can it be hidden from God by a veil when it is, as it were, a captive bound before Him? God has allowed the suppression of the individuality when man has *Bala'*. The soul no longer arrogates a degree of importance to its individuality but is amply satisfied with God's love and nearness. "Such, then, is the infinite duration of this newly found spiritual life and the intensity of the stage of *Bala'* that the suppression of the individuality is completely submerged by the lightning flash of God's regard. As a result, the soul derives spiritual pleasures from *Bala'* and is delighted with its *Bala'* with God, because it can enjoy propinquity with God and the wound of *Bala'* is soothed. The soul is not bent down under the burden of *Bala'* nor does it chafe at its spiritual load. Their experience makes heroes of them—because of the secrets revealed to them they stay conquered by God, awaiting His commands that Allah may designate what shall be done." '[2]

To Junaid, Unification was the highest state of enlightenment; it was a fresh kind of knowledge he called *ma'rifa*. It was revealed to devotees who had reached the state of *Tawhid* and were termed *'arifs*. According to Junaid the *'arif* was not the seeker but the *muwahhid* (one endowed

[1] *Personality and writings of al-Junayd*, p. 81; quoted from Qushairi. [2] ibid, pp. 85-6.

with the knowledge of Unification) to whom God in His grace had revealed Himself. However, an *'arif* was not some supernatural being. Junaid said:

> 'The *'arif* could not be an *'arif* until he is like earth upon which the pious and impious walk; and like the clouds that are spread over everything; and like the rains that descend upon all places quite without any likes and dislikes.'[1]

What Junaid had expressed cautiously and soberly was now to be phrased in ecstatic, radical terms by his younger contemporary, Abu'l-Maghis al-Husain bin Mansur al-Hallaj, the tragic, ill-fated figure who was to become the great martyr of medieval sufism. Hallaj was born about 244/857–58 at Tur, in Fars, to the north-west of al-Bayza. His father was a wool carder, who later settled in the textile centre of Wasit.[2] Hallaj was educated at Wasit and Basra. He came into contact with Junaid at Baghdad and then made a *hajj* to Mecca. After his return Hallaj wandered preaching through Khurasan dressed in a soldier's uniform, instead of the traditional woollen cloak of a sufi. By this time Hallaj had gathered about four hundred disciples who accompanied him on his travels. After a second pilgrimage, he wandered through India and Turkistan, where he acquainted himself with Buddhism and Manichaeism. About 290/903 he again went to Mecca, this time wearing only an Indian loin-cloth round his waist and a piece of patched and motley cloth thrown around his shoulders.

After this, his final pilgrimage, Hallaj remained in Baghdad. There he uttered his famous theopathic cry: *Ana'l-Haqq* (I am [God] the Truth). Orthodox opinion was sharply divided as to what discipline should be meted out to one who uttered such alleged profanities, however, they were forced to tread warily—the number of Hallaj's supporters at the Caliph's court was by no means meagre. His enemies denounced him for claiming mystical union with God and for causing moral instability among the people. Hallaj's disciples and friends explained that mystic inspiration was beyond the jurisdiction of an earthly court. However, the scramble for power between viziers of opposing sects finally led to Hallaj's imprisonment in 301/913. Current upheavals in politics postponed retribution being exacted for some years.

While in prison, Hallaj wrote his famous work, *Ta Sin al-Azal*, a meditation on the case of Iblis (the Devil) whose monotheism, Hallaj believed,

[1] *Personality and writings of al-Junayd*, p. 102. For biographical details *see* Sulami, pp. 141-150; Abu Nu'aim, X, pp. 255-87; Qushairi, pp. 20-1; al-Yafe'i, II, pp. 231-36; al-Subki', II, pp. 80-3; Nicholson, pp. 128-30, 185-89; L. Massignon, pp. 273-78; R.C. Zaehner, *Hindu and Muslim mysticism*, pp. 135-53, 218-34; Arberry, pp. 199-213.

[2] Before the foundation of Baghdad, it was an important city in Iraq and originally occupied both banks of the Tigris. It lay equidistant from Kufa, Basra and Ahwaz.

prevented him from prostrating before Adam. He also wrote a book on the ascension (*mi'raj*) of Muhammad. Imprisoned for nine years, the accusations against Hallaj assumed various forms. A statement of his reminding Muslims to, '...proceed seven times around the Ka'ba of one's heart,' was interpreted as meaning that he was a Qaramati Isma'ili attempting to destroy the Ka'ba in Mecca. The basis of the case against Hallaj which finally secured his condemnation was that he rejected the transcendence of God and preached infusion theories or incarnation (*hulul*). Ultimately on 29 Zu'l-Qa'da 309/1 April 922 Hallaj was hung on a gibbet after various revolting and merciless tortures had been inflicted.

Modern scholars have had access to Hallaj's works. Among those books which have been published about him are the *Akhbar al-Hallaj* (translated into French by Louis Massignon and entitled *The Passion d'al-Hallaj*), the *Kitab al-Tawasin*, a collection of eleven short treatises including the *Ta Sin al-Azal* and Hallaj's Arabic *Diwan* or collected poems.

Hallaj's concept of *Ana'l-Haqq* does not imply that human nature (*nasut*) is identical or interchangeable with the Divine (*Lahut*); to take a less elaborate simile—water does not become wine, when they are mixed. The following lines by Hallaj are most expressive:

> 'I am He whom I love, and He whom I love is I.
> We are *two* spirits dwelling in one body,
> If thou seest me, thou seest Him;
> And if thou seest Him, thou seest us both.'

Elsewhere Hallaj writes: 'We are two spirits fused together (*halalna*) in a single body.' This, however, also does not prove his belief in *hulul*. Hallaj's concept is identical with that of the leading Christian mystic, St. John of the Cross: 'Two natures (God and man) in a single spirit and love of God!'—Actually Hallaj meant that his 'I' was 'acted upon' by divine grace. Nicholson explains it this way:

> 'According to Hallaj, the essence of God's essence is Love. Before the creation God loved Himself in absolute unity and through love revealed Himself to Himself alone. Then, desiring to behold that love-in-aloneness, that love without otherness and duality, as an external object, He brought forth from non-existence an image of Himself, endowed with all His attributes and names. This divine image is Adam, in and by whom God is manifest—divinity objectified in humanity.'[1]

[1]R.A. Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic mysticism*, Cambridge, 1967, p. 80; For biographical details see Sulami, pp. 308–13; al-Khatib, VIII, pp. 112–41, Ibn Khallikan, I, no. 181; al-Yafe'i, II, pp. 253–61; Nicholson, pp. 150–52; Arberry, pp. 264–71; R.A. Nicholson, *The idea of personality in Sufism*, Cambridge, 1923, pp. 25–37.

Hallaj's views were repudiated by Junaid but the latter did not dissociate himself from either Abu Yazid or Shibli who expressed their mystical experiences in a similar way. Abu Bakr Dulaf bin Jahdar al-Shibli was of Khurasanian origin but had been born in Baghdad or Samarra. The son of a high-ranking court official, he had served as governor of Damawand, about fifty miles north-east of Tehran. Having had various intense spiritual experiences, Shibli resigned his position and became one of Junaid's disciples, immediately embarking on an intense course of self-mortification. This included begging in the streets of Baghdad. Later Shibli returned to Damawand where he went from house to house attempting to make amends to those he may have dissatisfied while governor. Returning to Baghdad, Junaid again urged Shibli to beg and also to perform menial services for his master's companions. All this was done so that not a vestige of the former governor's pomp and pride remained.

Of Shibli's own pronouncements, we know, he insisted people should pronounce God's name only with a background of true experience and understanding. Overpowered by mystic ecstasy, Shibli would cry out publicly: 'God.' Junaid reproached him saying:

> '"We utter these words in grottos. . . now you have come and declare them in the market-place." "I am speaking and I am listening," Shibli replied. "In both worlds who is there but I? Nay rather, these are words proceeding from God to God, and Shibli is not there at all." "If that is the case, you have dispensation," Junaid said.'

According to Shibli, only when God uprooted all the lust from a man's heart, was the bodily eye safe from its own hidden dangers. God must replace lust with a desire for Himself; until then the spiritual eye might be hindered from other than Him alone.

For some time Shibli was committed to a mental asylum because of his ideas, however, no stronger action was taken against him. He died in 334/946 at the age of eighty seven.[1] The following references to Shibli, during the period of his confinement, which were related by 'Attar, give some insight into Shibli's own rationalization of his behaviour, which others interpreted as madness:

> 'When Shibli was confined in chains a group of his companions one day went to visit him. "Who are you?," he cried. "Your friends," they told him. He at once began to throw stones at them, and they all fled. "Liars!" he shouted. "Do friends run away from their friend because of a few stones? This proves that you are friends of yourselves, not of me!" Once Shibli was observed running with a burning coal in his hand. "Where are you going?" they asked. "I

[1]Arberry, p. 282.

am running to set fire to the Ka'ba," he answered, "so that men may henceforward care only for the Lord of the Ka'ba." On another occasion he was holding in his hand a piece of wood alight at both ends. "What are you going to do?" he was asked. "I am going to set Hell on fire with one end and Paradise with the other," he replied, "so that men may concern themselves only with God.'"[1]

By the time Shibli died, sufism had completed its formative stage. The goal of the sufi path was God alone, and anything that hindered one from the object of this quest was rejected. Sufis applied an esoteric meaning to verses in the Qur'an which related to repentance, abstinence, renunciation, poverty, patience, trust in God, satisfaction, fear, hope etc. The main aim of their lives was to rid themselves of hypocrisy and lust—to them, latent forms of polytheism. Thus a division grew up between the 'ulama,' who administered the *Shari'a*, and the mystics, who they denounced as ignorant of the law. In turn, sufis criticized the 'ulama' as externalists and formalists who were unaware of the real spirit of the *Shari'a*. To the sufis, the study of the esoteric was: 'the science of the actions of the interior which depended on an interior organ namely, the heart (*al-qalb*).' To externalists, the *qalb* was only a physical organ of flesh and blood, but to the sufis it was a spiritual organ. An illuminated heart was a mirror in which every divine quality was reflected. *Ma'rifa* or the gnosis of Hellenistic theosophy was based on a light of divine grace that flashed into the heart. The wearing of woollen garments and patched frocks, a knowledge of the mystical allegories, anecdotes and technical expressions or hypocritical prayers, and fasting, did not lead to mystic illumination. Only when the individual self was lost, the doors to mystic illumination were opened and the Universal Self was found. All true sufis denounced antinomianism and libertinism. Nevertheless, their language describing divine love unavoidably involved the use of erotic symbolism which was tinged with sensuality. Sufi ethics of love inculcated in mystics and enraptured contemplation resulting in expressions known as *shatahat* (hybrid utterances). These expressions were not, however, a normal aspect of sufi life; they emanated from what was called *sukr* (a state of intoxication). In contrast to this was the controlled and disciplined side of sufi life, known as *sahw* (sobriety). Later the states of *sukr* and *sahw* were recognized as two different schools of sufism; the former represented by Bayazid and Hallaj and the latter by Muhasibi and Junaid. What sufis of both schools tended to believe was that, as a rain drop was not annihilated in the ocean, although it ceased to exist individually, similarly the sufi soul in the unitive state was indistinguishable from the Universal Divine.

[1]Arberry, p. 281; Biographical notes are to be found in Sulami, pp. 346-55; Sarraj, *Kitab al-Luma'*, London, 1963, pp. 395–406; Qushairi, p. 27; Ibn Khallikan, II, no. 215; Nicholson, pp. 155–56; Arberry, pp. 277–86; Ibn al-'Imad, II, p. 338.

The asceticism and renunciation of the mystics did not cut them off from Muslim society anywhere in the Islamic world. Their example radiated to all sections of the community. Their humane treatment of animals and birds, especially to dogs, regarded as unclean by orthodox Muslims, was noteworthy and it tended to affect their attitude towards all human beings, including non-Muslims and members of the so-called heterodox sects. In general, sufis avoided the courts of their rulers and the company of the governing classes. However, they did not hesitate to remind the élite, whenever the opportunity arose, that the common Muslims had been divinely entrusted to their care.

During the first two centuries of Islam, sufi discipleship had become better organized. Followers gathered around al-Hakim in Tirmiz, Abu'l-'Abbas Sayyar in Marw, Qassar in Nishapur, Bayazid in Bastam, Khafif in Shiraz, Sahl in Tustar, and around Kharraz, Muhasibi, Junaid and Nuri in Baghdad.[1] This gave rise to the development of sufi sects. Each sect evolved its own framework of mystic practices under the guidance of its director (*Shaikh, Pir* or *Murshid*). Their forms of recollection (*zikr*) and meditation differed; their ideologies were often irreconcilable but there was no hostility among sufis who adhered to the basic framework of the *Shari'a*.

A sect of sufis which was imbued with Hindu, Chinese and Tibetan beliefs of the eternity of the spirit shocked the majority of sufis who believed in the Islamic concept of the spirit.[2] The former were known as Hululis. Discussing the theory of the eternity of the spirit, Hujwiri related that Sunnis also believed that the spirit was non-eternal (*muhdas*), that it existed prior to the formation of the body, but that it could not be transferred from one body to another. God was eternal but His creatures had a finite existence. Therefore it was impossible that the eternal should be mingled with its opposite and fused with it. Hujwiri reminds us that Hululis and other followers of metempsychosis who believed that the spirit was an eternal characteristic of God, stressed that he could never become an attribute of His creatures. Hujwiri added:

> 'The spirit is created and is under God's command. Anyone who holds another belief is in flagrant error and cannot distinguish what is non-eternal from what is eternal. No saint, if his saintship be sound, can possibly be ignorant of the attributes of God.'[3]

[1]According to Hujwiri the sufi sects named after the above Masters were approved ones. He gives a detailed description of each in the *Kashf al-Mahjub*; Nicholson, pp. 176–260.

[2]When the Quraish idolaters, prompted by the Jews, asked the Prophet Muhammad to explain the nature and essence of the spirit, God in a revelation denied the eternity of the spirit saying. 'The spirit belongs to that which (that is, the creation of which) my Lord command' (*Qur'an*, XVII, 87). The Muslims believe that the spirit is a substance, rather than an attribute. It is a subtle body, which comes and goes at God's command. To Muslims it is not eternal (*qadim*). Nicholson, pp. 261–63.

[3]Nicholson, pp. 263–64.

The orthodox sufis dissociated themselves from the doctrine of *hulul* which was to become the most convenient and dangerous weapon in the 'ulama' armoury with which to denounce and suppress sufism. The movement's esoteric and ascetic practices and its members' indulgence in music and dancing also provided the theologians with opportunities to crush sufi activities. However, the transformation of sufism into an organised religious movement during the eleventh and twelfth centuries was coupled with the appearance of sufi texts in which the major ideas of mysticism were argued, codified and substantiated. This helped enormously to give the movement a firmer, more legitimate foundation on which to develop.

Sufi Literature

In previous pages we have referred to a number of sufi authors. Generally their works were composed for specialists. From the middle of the tenth century onwards, many scholars of *Fiqh* and *Hadis* brought their academic training to bear on the study of sufism and wrote texts related to sufi theories and ideas in an attempt to clarify misunderstandings. They were essentially scholars who were also trained in sufism.

One of the earliest of these authors was Abu Sa'id Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Ziyad ibn Bishr ibn al-'Arabi. He had been born in Basra, but moved to Mecca, where he remained until his death in 341/952–53. Ibn al-'Arabi was Junaid's disciple and for about thirty years a *Hadis* teacher in Mecca. This scholastic training helped ibn al-'Arabi in his later work, the *Tabaqat al-Nussak*. Although this text has not survived, extracts indicate that the author laid a firm foundation for the later sufi literary tradition.

Abu Muhammad Ja'far ibn Nusayr ibn al-Qasim al-Khawass al-Baghdadi al-Khuldi, who died in 348/959–60, was also trained in *Hadis*. He wrote the *Hikayat al-Awliya'* (Anecdotes of the Saints), a compendium of mystical subtleties. The work itself has not survived, but the *Kitab al-Luma' fi al-Tasawwuf* by his pupil, Abu Nasr 'Abdu'llah ibn Ali al-Sarraj al-Tusi (d. 378/988–89) still exists and has been critically edited. Abu Sai'd's disciple, Abu Talib Muhammad ibn 'Ali 'Atiya al-Makki (d. 386/996–97) wrote the *Kitab Qut al-Qulub fi Mu'amalat al-Mahbub*, an authoritative description of sufism.

Al-Makki's contemporary, Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Ishaq al-Kalabazi had great literary gifts. His book, *Kitab al-Ta'ruf li Mazhab al-Tasawwuf*, is a lucid description of sufi discipline. The author was a native of Bukhara who wrote in Arabic. He died in 388/998–99. His major work, however, was immediately translated into Persian by another Bukhara scholar, Mustamli, who himself died in 434/1042–43.

The earliest known source of biographical details is the *Tabaqat al-Sufiyya* by 'Abdu'r Rahman Muhammad al-Sulami of Nishapur. He died in 412/1021–22. Based on stories contained in this work, 'Abdu'llah

al-Ansari al-Harawi, who will be discussed separately, delivered lectures on the life and teachings of earlier sufis and on the basis of Ansari's lectures, a new work in Persian emerged, also entitled *Tabaqat al-Sufiyya*. Sulami's *Tabaqat* laid the foundations of a genre of biographical literature which classified the sufis of one generation, or three or four decades, under separate chapters, calling them *tabaqat* (classes). Sulami's models were the biographical dictionaries of narrators or transmitters of the traditions of the Prophet, such as the *Kitab al-Tabaqat al-Kabir*. Sulami's *Haq'iq al-Tafsir* gives an important insight into the sufi understanding of Qur'anic teaching. The *Hilyat al-Awliya' wa Tabaqat al-Asfiya'*, by Hafiz Abu Nu'aim Ahmad ibn 'Abdu'llah, who died in 430/1038–39, is a remarkable collection of sufi traditions and stories.

A most authoritative study of sufism itself is, the *Risala* of Abu'l-Qasim 'Abdu'l-Karim ibn Hawazin al-Qushairi of Nishapur, who died in 465/1072. The work is an effort to express the orthodox nature of sufism, and was undertaken between 437 and 438/1045 and 1046. Qushairi's *Risala* is an excellent summary of earlier sufi literature written in Arabic. The significance of the work prompted Qushairi's disciple, Abu 'Ali Hasan bin Ahmad 'Usmani to translate it into Persian before Qushairi's death in 465/1072. Qushairi wrote other treatises on different subjects of interest to sufis and a commentary on the Qur'an.

Extensive studies equipped Qushairi to define sufi terms authoritatively and at the same time to make them acceptable to a sizable section of later readers. Differentiating between *Shari'a* and *Haqiqa*, he writes:

> 'The *Shari'a* is concerned with the observance of the outward manifestations of religion [i.e., rites and acts of devotion (*'ibadat*) and duties (*mu'amalat*)]; whilst *Haqiqa* (Reality) concerns inward vision of divine power (*mushahadat ar-Rububiyya*). Every rite not informed by the spirit of Reality is valueless, and every spirit of Reality not restrained by the Law is incomplete. The Law exists to regulate mankind, whilst the Reality makes us know the dispositions of God. The Law exists for the service of God, whilst the Reality exists for contemplation of Him. The Law exists for obeying what He had ordained, whilst the Reality concerns witnessing and understanding the order He has decreed: the one is outer, the other inner. I heard the learned Abu 'Ali ad-Daqqaq say, "The phrase *Iyyaka na'budu* (Thee we serve) is for sustaining the Law, whilst *Iyyaka nasta'in*[1] (Thy help we ask) is for affirming the Reality." Know that the Law is the Reality because God ordained it, and the Reality is also the Law because it is the knowledge of God likewise ordained by Him.'[2]

[1]The two phrases occur in chapter one. *Al-Fatiha*, 'The Opening', is regarded as the essence of the *Qur'an*. It is an essential part of all Muslim prayers.

[2]Qushairi, p. 46; extract translated by J.S. Trimingham, *The Sufi orders in Islam*, Oxford, 1973, p. 142.

Another prolific sufi author was Abu'l-Hasan 'Ali bin 'Usman bin 'Ali al-Ghaznawi al-Jullabi al-Hujwiri. Of his many works only his greatest, the *Kashf al-Mahjub*, has survived.

The most outstanding sufi author, however, was Abu Hamid Muhammad bin Muhammad Ghazali (450/1058–505/1111), from Tus near Mashhad. Educated at Tus, Gurgan and Nishapur, sometime before 1091 Ghazali underwent a period of deep scepticism which prompted him to search for a more meaningful way of life. From 1091 to 1095 he was a professor at the Nizamiyya seminary in Baghdad, which had originally been founded by the Saljuq vizier, Nizamu'l-Mulk Tusi (b. *c.* 1018, died 1092). Political reasons, as well as his personal aversion to the legal wranglings of the 'ulama', forced Ghazali to resign in 1095. From that time until 1106, he lived in Syria. During this period Ghazali also travelled to Mecca, visited Alexandria briefly and went to Tus. All this time he lived like a sufi.

Ghazali's greatest work, the *Ihya' al-'Ulum al-Din* (Revival of the Religious Sciences), was the literary offspring of these years. In 1106, he accepted the post of lecturer at another Nizamiyya seminary, this time in Nishapur. Now he was both an *'alim* and a sufi, with a growing conviction that he was personally destined to lead a revival in Islam of its earlier pristine purity (*mujaddid*). Before his death, Ghazali once more retired to the life of a sufi in his own khanqah at Tus. But the principal mission of his later years was to reconcile the life of the *madrasa*, or seminary, to that of the khanqah or monastery.

Following his period of scepticism, Ghazali studied the Arabic Neoplatonism of al-Farabi (d. 339/950) and Ibn Sina (370/980—428/1037), and wrote a work on their philosophy called the *Maqasid al-Falasifa*. In 488/1095 he compiled a detailed criticism of the philosophical theories which he considered either inconsistent with their authors' claims or irreconcilable with Sunni beliefs. He called it the *Tahafut al-Falasifa* (Incoherence of the Philosophers). Ghazali, however, did not neglect Aristotelian logic and wrote two books justifying its use for religious purposes.

The *Ihya' al-'Ulum* is a detailed examination of *'ibadat* (worship), *'adat* (social customs), *muhlikat* (vices or character faults) and *munjiyat* (virtues leading to salvation). Ghazali himself abridged the *Ihya al-'Ulum* in a Persian edition, and added some new material in order to give further impact to his teachings. The new work, was given the title, the *Kimiya'-i Sa'adat* (Alchemy of Felicity). Ghazali's other writings on sufism include *Mishkat al-Anwar* (Niche of Lights) and the *Bidayat al-Hidaya* (Beginning of Guidance).

To Ghazali the mystic path included both intellectual and contemplative activities. He acquired a background to the former by reading the works of Haris al-Muhasibi and Abu Talib al-Makki, and also through the various anecdotes about Abu Yazid Bastami and Shibli. Convinced

that mysticism could not be approached through the mind alone, Ghazali advocated immediate experience (*zawq*, literally 'tasting') attained through ecstasy and a moral rejuvenation. Ghazali's own ascetic exercises opened for him the door to mysticism. He describes the mystic path, or *Tariqa* this way:

> '...purity which is the first condition of it (the way)...is the purification of the heart completely from what is other than God...the key to it, which...corresponds to the opening act of adoration in prayer, is the sinking of the heart completely in the recollection of God; and the end of it is complete absorption (*fana'*) in God. ...this is the end...to those first steps which almost come within the sphere of choice and personal responsibility...
>
> With this first stage of the 'way' there begin the revelations and visions. (They)...behold angels and the spirits of the prophets;... Later a higher stage is reached...they come to stages in the 'way' which it is hard to describe in language...In general what they manage to achieve is nearness to God...He who has attained the mystic state need do no more than say:
>
> Of the things I do not remember, what was, was;
> Think it good; do not ask an account of it.'[1]

Through his own experiences with the mystic path, Ghazali claimed to have achieved the true and unique nature of revelation. This, according to him, was not correctly understood by either scholastic theologians or philosophers.

Ghazali emphasized that heaven and earth were created through God's will as embodied in His command: 'Be.' He is both transcendent and immanent, but He is not the Absolute of philosophers but the personal God of the Muslims. Singleminded sincerity in prayers by the annihilation of everything else in the heart created a situation in which God's love preceded that of His servant; the latter's qualities were transformed and he became God-like. Ghazali reminded the worshipper:

> 'God differs from (earthly) kings for all His unique majesty and greatness, in inspiring His creatures to ask and make their plea to Him, and He differs from the sultans (of this world) in opening the door and lifting the veil and giving leave to His servants to enter into confidential intercourse...and He does not limit Himself to permission, but He shews His kindness by inspiring desire for this and calling (His servant) to Him. And others, kings who are but

[1]Al-Ghazali, *al Munqiz min az-zalal*, 'Deliverance from Error', tr., by W.M. Watt, *The faith and practice of al-Ghazali*, London, 1963, pp. 60–1.

creatures, do not freely grant a private audience except after the offer of gifts and bribery.'[1]

Ghazali's comments on the beliefs of Abu Yazid and Hallaj are a significant reminder to mystics that the words of passionate lovers in the state of ecstasy should not be spoken but remain concealed.

Ghazali's principal contribution to sufism was in the great emphasis he laid on the observance of the outward form of religious activities. The consummation of sufism, according to him, was impossible if associated with a neglect of formal observance. At the same time he insisted that an understanding of the religio-social ethics of Islam necessitated an adherence to its spiritual aspects.

Ghazali condemned different forms of pride, vanity, self-conceit, self-deception, envy, jealousy, anger, malice, love of wealth and status. But like al-Muhasibi, it was hypocrisy, which he considered to be a form of polytheism, that was singled out for his most scathing attack. Repentance involved an expiation for past evil and a simultaneous examination of one's inner life. The virtue of patience was also highly recommended by Ghazali; worship of God did not merely include praise of Him but the correct use of what had been endowed by Him.

Sufi poetry and political changes in Iran

It was the prose works of tenth and eleventh century sufis which had the greatest effect in fashioning sufism into an orthodox mould. However, the sensitivity and euphony of transcendental love, as it led to annihilation, found its greatest expression through poetry, particularly that written in Persian.

The *ruba'is* (quatrains) ascribed to Shaikh Abu Sa'id bin Abi'l-Khair were, in fact, the great poetical legacy of his predecessors. It was remarkable that such a body of sufi poetical works were available to Shaikh Abu Sa'id, which he in turn recited in lectures and bequeathed after his death to future generations. Not only in his literary role but also in his reorganization of khanqah life did the Shaikh prove himself a pioneer.

Abu Sa'id bin Abi'l-Khair's rise to prominence augured well for sufism. His own prestige helped to firmly establish the popularity of sufism amidst the new political and orthodox religious movements of the eleventh century in Iran and Central Asia. This was the era of the decline of the political power of the 'Abbasids and the ascendancy of semi-independent and independent monarchies from amongst Turkic dynasties of Iranian origin.

The earliest ruler to establish an independent kingdom was Tahir bin al-Husain. He founded the Tahirid dynasty in Khurasan which ruled from 205/821 to 259/873. The Tahirids were of Iranian descent and

[1] Al-Ghazali, *Ihya al-'Ulum al-Din'*, extract in *An early mystic of Baghdad*, p. 276.

orthodox Sunnis and their support came mainly from Iranian and Arab military sections and the landed classes. The longest surviving dynasty, although it finally lost independence and was replaced, was the Saffarid. Founded in Sistan in 253/867, by Ya'quub bin Lays al-Saffar, a coppersmith, it expanded throughout modern Afghanistan to Kabul, close to the very fringes of the Indian sub-continent. In turn, the dynasty yielded to the suzerainty of the Samanids, the Ghaznawids and the Mongols, the latter continued to rule the Sistan region until 885/1480.

Between 204/819 and 395/1005, the Samanids ruled Khurasan and Transoxiana with their capital at Bukhara. By the end of the tenth century the Turkic Qarakhanids and the Ghaznawids had smashed their power and the river Oxus became the boundary line between the two powers. The Qarakhanids ruled in Transoxiana and eastern Turkistan between 382/992 and 607/1211. Ghaznawid power was established by Sebuktigin (366/977-387/997) whose career began as a governor of the Samanids. Yamain al-Dawla Mahmud (388/998–421/1030) established Ghaznawid rule over Khurasan, Afghanistan and the Panjab. Before his death, Mahmud was able to conquer parts of western Iran, including Rayy and Hamadan. His son, Mas'ud (1030-40), lost Khurasan and Khwarazm to the Saljuqs, and in turn the Ghurids of Central Afghanistan crushed the Ghaznawids. The first return blow of the Ghurids was delivered by 'Ala'u'd-Din who defeated Bahram Shah (1118–52) in two hotly contested battles. As a result Bahram Shah was forced to flee to the Panjab. The devastation and plunder of Ghazna by 'Ala'u'd-Din's troops prompted his nickname, Jahan Suz (Incendiary of the World). Under Ghiyas'ud-Din Muhammad of Ghur (558/1163–599/1203) and his brother Shihabu'd-Din (later Mu'izzu'd-Din Muhammad 599/1203–602/1206) the Ghurid empire, expanded to Bengal in eastern India. The Ghurids weakened the power of the Khwarazm-Shah of Khiva and made serious inroads into the Khurasan region. The Ghurids' enduring achievement was the conquest of northern India.

The Saljuqs, who expelled the Ghaznawids from the Khurasan region, were Turkic tribes from the Steppes north of the Caspian and Aral seas. In 429/1038 their leader, Tughril, (1038–63) in his capital Nishapur, proclaimed himself Sultan of Khurasan, at the same time becoming a staunch supporter of Sunni orthodoxy. Under the Saljuqs, the Perso-Islamic pattern of politics in this area crystallized. Its intellectual and political champion was the great vizier, Nizamu'l-Mulk Tusi. The Saljuq government was run by an Iranian bureaucracy and the army by Turkic slave commanders. A number of orthodox intellectuals, including Ghazali, popularized the idea of the interdependence of Muslim kingship and Sunni orthodoxy. According to Ghazali, God sent prophets to lead His people back to Him. Kingship was, in turn designed to prevent aggressive behaviour between people. Monarchs, he wrote, were entrusted with the material well-being of God's servants. Their unique

position endowed them with a special kind of divine light (*farr*).

Under Chingiz, the rise of the Mongols marked the end of Turkic power in Transoxiana. In 1221 the last Khwarazm-Shah, Jalalu'd-Din, was driven by Chingiz across the Indus, and in 1256 the Il-khanid branch of the Mongols seized Baghdad, assassinating the last 'Abbasid, al-Musta'sim, two years later. The capital of the newly-established Il-khanid empire was Tabriz. However, the Mamluk Turks of Egypt managed to halt the Mongol advance on Syria, at the same time destroying the prevailing myth of Mongol invincibility.

Rawandi, a Saljuq historian in Anatolia and Turkey, wrote of a supernatural power which spoke from the Meccan Ka'ba to Abu Hanifa, the founder of the Hanafi school of *Fiqh*, promising him that as long as the sword remained in the hands of the Turks, the Hanafis would not perish.[1]

The political upheavals from the tenth to the thirteenth centuries reinforced sufi beliefs in the transitory nature of the world and the necessity to remain both apart and independent from it. By contrast, the 'ulama,' dependent on the state economically, became embroiled in political activities. Sufis were now in a position to remain independent from the government for merchants and craft guilds assumed positions as their patrons. The intimate relationship between guilds and sufi khanqahs can be seen in stories connected with the life of Abu Sa'id bin Abi'l-Khair.

Having dealt with the major political changes between the tenth and thirteenth centuries in order to give a background to the sufi movement, we shall now return to a description of sufi poetry, khanqahs and the movement's leading figures. To illustrate the life of mystics in this period, four sufi poets will be discussed briefly.

Abu Sa'id Fazlu'llah bin Abi'l-Khair, the great Iranian sufi and a transmitter of Persian poetry, was born on 1 Muharram 357/7 December 967 in Mayhana, the present Me'ana, between Abiward and Sarakhs, in Khurasan. His father, Babu Bu'l-Khair, was a druggist as well as a sufi. Although there were numerous *ribats* (hospices) and khanqahs scattered throughout Khurasan, many sufis in Mayhana, Abu Sa'id's father included, preferred to live, and hold *sama'* rituals, in their own houses. At the request of his mother, as a boy, Abu Sa'id was taken to the house of a sufi where a *sama'* party was being held. There the following quatrain, sung by a *qawwal* or musician, made a deep and lasting impression on him:

> 'God gives the dervish love—and love is woe;
> By dying near and dear to Him they grow.
> The generous youth will freely yield his life,
> The man of God cares naught for worldly show.'[2]

[1] *Rahat al-Sudur*, London, 1921, pp. 13, 17.

[2] R.A. Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic mysticism*, Cambridge, 1967, p. 3.

Abu Sa'id obtained a religious education at Mayhana, Marw and Sarakhs. Although he learnt *Fiqh*, Qur'anic exegesis and *Hadis*, he remained profoundly devoted to sufism. Abu'l-Qasim Bishr-i Yasin of Mayhana was his first guide in mysticism and filled him with a strong belief in the disinterested love of God. He requested his pupil to learn by heart the following *Hadis:*

> 'God said to me on the night of my Ascension, O Muhammad! as for those who would draw nigh to Me, their best means...is by performance of the obligations which I have laid upon them. My servant continually seeks to win My favour by works of supererogation until I love him; and when I love him, I am to him an ear and an eye and a hand and a helper: through Me he hears, and through Me he sees, and through Me he takes.'

Bishr also suggested that Abu Sa'id recite the following quatrain, in order to be able to converse with God:

> 'Without Thee, O Beloved, I cannot rest;
> Thy goodness towards me I cannot reckon.
> Tho' every hair on my body becomes a tongue,
> A thousandth part of the thanks due to Thee I cannot tell.'[1]

After Bishr died in 380/990, Abu Sa'id continued training under Abu'l-Fazl Muhammad bin Hasan al-Sarakhsi at Sarakhs. His teacher's influence made Abu Sa'id abandon his formal education. Abu'l-Fazl recorded that Abu Sa'id obtained a *khirqa* (a cloak which marked sufi initiation) from the celebrated mystic writer, al-Sulami. He also received another *khirqa*, this time from an Amul sufi, Abu'l-'Abbas al-Qassab.

Abu Sa'id spent about seven years living as a hermit and later practised ascetic exercises in a *ribat-i kuhan*, an old deserted *ribat*. His father's description of Abu Sa'id's penance is valuable as it describes a unique spiritual practice.

> 'My son...walked on until he reached the *ribat-i kuhan*. He entered it and shut the gate behind him, while I went up on the roof. I saw him go into a chapel which was in the *ribat*, and close the door. Looking through the chapel window, I waited to see what would happen. There was a stick lying on the floor, and it had a rope fastened to it. He took up the stick and tied the end of the rope to his foot. Then, laying the stick across the top of a pit that was at the corner of the chapel, he slung himself into the pit head downwards, and began to recite the Qur'an. He remained in that posture until

[1] R.A. Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic mysticism*, Cambridge, 1967, p. 5.

daybreak, when, having recited the whole Qur'an, he raised himself from the pit, replaced the stick where he had found it, opened the door, came out of the chapel, and commenced to perform his ablution in the middle of the *ribat*. I descended from the roof, hastened home, and slept until he came in.'[1]

The following passage is Abu Sa'id's own summary of his self-mortifications:

> 'When I was a novice, I bound myself to do eighteen things: I fasted continually; I abstained from unlawful food; I practised recollection (*zikr*) uninterruptedly; I kept awake at night; I never reclined on the ground; I never slept but in a sitting posture; I sat facing the Ka'ba; I never leaned against anything; I never looked at a handsome youth or at women whom it would have been unlawful for me to see unveiled; I did not beg; I was content and resigned to God's will; I always sat in the mosque and did not go into the market, because the Prophet said that the market is the filthiest of places and the mosque the cleanest. In all my acts I was a follower of the Prophet. Every four-and-twenty hours I completed a recitation of the Qur'an. In my seeing I was blind, in my hearing deaf, in my speaking dumb. For a whole year I conversed with no one. People called me a lunatic, and I allowed them to give me that name, relying on the Tradition that a man's faith is not made perfect until he is supposed to be mad. I performed everything that I had read or heard of as having been done or commanded by the Prophet.'[2]

Every available means to crush the instinct of his *nafs* or lower self was adopted by Abu Sa'id. In order to achieve self-abasement, he performed various services to the poor such as bring them water, and helping them in heavy labouring. For the dervishes, he would clean their cells, lavatories and privies. Feeling that begging was the most difficult and humbling task of all, Abu Sa'id would ask for food for his fellow sufis. Through this experience he came to believe that the shortest way to God was in extending material comfort to his fellow Muslims.[3]

Around 415/1024, Abu Sa'id settled in Nishapur. There he became a sufi preacher attracting large audiences. On one occasion, the number of sufis in his khanqah was estimated as eighty travellers and forty permanent residents. Abu Sa'id's stay in Nishapur upset the Karramis[4]

[1]R.A. Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic mysticism*, Cambridge, 1967, pp. 13-4.

[2]ibid, p. 15.

[3]Muhammad bin Munawwar, *Asraru't-Tawhid*, Tehran, 2nd edition, 1348/1969, pp. 34-7.

[4]A Sunni sect which was very popular in Khurasan around 370/980-81. The Karrami leader, Muhammad bin Ibrahim Simjur, prompted Mahmud of Ghazna to persecute a large number of the Isma'ili Shi'is. Their main centre was in Nishapur.

and other theologians, including the Shi'is, who wrote to Mahmud of Ghazna with the following complaint:

> 'A certain man has come hither from Mayhana and pretends to be a sufi. He preaches sermons but does not quote the Traditions of the Prophet. He holds sumptuous feasts and music is played by his orders, whilst the young men dance and eat sweetmeats and roasted fowls and all kinds of fruit. He declares that he is an ascetic, but this is neither asceticism nor sufism. Multitudes have joined him and are being led astray. Unless measures be taken to repair it, the mischief will soon become universal.'[1]

The Sultan ordered leading Shafi'i and Hanafi 'ulama' to make a thorough investigation of Abu Sa'id and, if guilty, to punish him according to the *Shari'a.* This tended to disturb the equanimity of the Nishapur sufis, but not the Shaikh's. Through his telepathic powers, he was aware of the proposed inquiry. A sumptuous feast was duly ordered and the Shaikh's indifference to worldly authorities, coupled by his supernatural powers, succeeded in stunning his opponents. Feeling trapped, the 'ulama' decided to drop their case against Shaikh Abu Sa'id. However, the latter's extravagant spending and entertainments involving music and dancing, which were often attended by young boys, shocked many sufis. Among them was al-Qushairi, the author of the *Risala*, who had spent his whole life attempting to reconcile orthodoxy and the sufi movement. The Shaikh's biographers however, mention a number of stories in which the two sufis were reconciled through Abu Sa'id's use of telepathy.

The personal life of the Shaikh also amazed many in Nishapur. Sometimes he wore wool, sometimes silk. Once Abu Sa'id shocked his audience

The founder of the sect was Abu 'Abdu'llah Muhammad bin Karram of Sistan who died in Jerusalem in *c.* 255/869. The following were the chief tenets of the Karramiya: '. . . the Divine Being is a Substance (*jawhar*), for which some of his followers substituted Body (*jism*), though without human members, and in contact (*mumassa*, for which the euphemism *Mulaqat* was substituted) with the Throne, which is located in space. This was apparently a deduction from the Qur'anic *'ala'l-'arshi 'stawa* (VII, 55; X, 3; XIII, 2; XX, 5; etc.), and, indeed, the rest of his theology would seem to have been an endeavour to work the Qur'anic texts into certain parts of the Aristotelian philosophy, notably the distinction between substance and accident, and that between *dynamis* and *energeia.* Thus his followers could maintain that God was 'speaking' before He spoke, and could be worshipped before there were any worshippers. The doctrine of the eternity of the world was reconciled with the Qur'anic creation by some subtle expedients; God, he held, was subject to certain Accidents, such as willing, perceiving, speaking, coming in contact; over such accidents He has power, but not over the world and the objects therein which were created not by His Will, but by the word *kun.* Thus, it would seem, the tense in *kun fa-yakunu* could have its proper meaning. H.A.R. Gibb and J.H. Krames, *Shorter encyclopaedia of Islam*, Leiden, 1961, p. 223.

[1] *Studies in Islamic mysticism*, p. 29.

by declaring, like Hallaj,: 'there is none other than God in this robe.' At the same time, according to his biographer, Abu Sa'id pushed his forefinger through his cloak.

The anecdotes of Abu Sa'id's luxurious feasts, in which thousands of candles were burnt during the day, give some indication of the amounts both available, and offered, to sufis by merchants and other devotees at that time. Often former traders and other wealthy disciples, before becoming ascetics, would give all their possessions to a khanqah of their choice. Sometimes Shaikh Abu Sa'id would send his servant, Hasan Mu'addib to raise money for his extravagances from his disciples, and on occasions, from his enemies. He contracted huge debts which were invariably paid by visiting merchant caravans. However, the Shaikh was opposed to a fixed source of income—nothing was accumulated for future use and everything was given away or used the same day it was received. Moreover, the Shaikh took care that his neighbours, and often people from the town, shared the pleasures of his entertainment.

In Nishapur, Ibn Sina (Avicenna), the philosopher, came into contact with the Shaikh. They had many lengthy conversations and some of their exchanges are preserved in the form of correspondence. Ibn Sina's mystic approach to the soul was the subject of a long ode[1] and was a recurring point of dispute between the two.

Sometime before 425/1033–34, Shaikh Abu Sa'id left Nishapur intending to make a *hajj*. Upon reaching Kharqan, he was dissuaded by the sufi Abu'l-Hasan Kharqani. Abu Sa'id then travelled to Bastam, Damghan and Rayy, finally returning to Mayhana. He spent the rest of his life there, dying on 4 Sha'ban 440/12 January 1049.

Before the Shaikh's death, the Saljuqs had conquered Khurasan. He managed to maintain amicable relations with Tughril (429/1038–455/1063) and was reported as having prophesied that Nizamu'l-Mulk would become a great vizier. Here is an interesting story related by Abu Sa'id about Mahmud of Ghazna.

> 'A high official of Mahmud saw the Sultan in a dream and asked after his health. Mahmud answered: "There is no place for any sultan here. I am nothing here. The Sultan is God the Most High—. Everything said in the world was wrong." The officer asked Mahmud to tell him of the treatment meted out to him (from God). Mahmud replied: "I am a prisoner here and have to account for every minor thing that happened during my life. The treasury was enjoyed by someone else, grief and lamentation have befallen me."'[2]

[1]E.G. Browne, *A literary history of Persia*, II, Cambridge, 1964, pp. 110-11; Irij Afshar ed. *Halat wa Sukhanan Shaikh Abu Sa'id Abu'l-Khair Mihni*, Tehran, 1349, Iranian era/1970, pp. 113-21.

[2]*Asraru't-Tawhid*, p. 268.

This story was used by the Shaikh to illustrate his own attitude towards wealth, that is, that it should be used for philanthropic purposes only. When a disciple performed an act of kindness to a dervish, he observed that it was better than a hundred genuflexions during prayers; if he gave him a mouthful of food, it was more praiseworthy than an entire night spent praying. The Shaikh believed God's men were not confined to mosques alone, they were in taverns, too. He described it this way:

> 'The true saint goes in and out amongst the people and eats and sleeps with them and buys and sells in the market and marries and takes part in social intercourse and never forgets God for a single moment.'[1]

The following are among some of Shaikh Abu Sa'id's definitions on sufism:

> 'Sufism is two things: to look in one direction and to live in one way. Sufism is a name attached to its object; when it reaches its ultimate perfection, it is God. . . (the end of sufism is that, for the sufi, nothing should exist except God).
> The sufi is he who is pleased with all that God does, in order that God may be pleased with all that he does.
> Sufism is patience under God's commanding and forbidding, and acquiescence and resignation in the events determined by divine providence. Sufism is the will of the Creator concerning His creatures when no creature exists.
> To be a sufi is to cease from taking trouble (*takalluf*); and there is no greater trouble for thee than thine own self (*tu'i-yi tu*), for when thou art occupied with thyself, thou remainest away from God.
> Even this, sufism, is polytheism (*shirk*).
> . . . (it) consists in guarding the soul from what is other than God; and there is nothing other than God.'[2]

Unimpressed by miraculous feats of certain sufis, Abu Sa'id compared those who claimed to walk on water with frogs and waterfowls, and those who claimed to fly through the air with flies and insects, all of whom were similarly mobile.[3] To him the first stage of sufi discipline was self mortification and the last, contemplation. When the unveiling was completed, ascetic practices and religious forms would not be necessary, for sufis lived in a state of permanent communion with God. There was no hell but selfhood, no paradise but selflessness.

Shaikh Abu Sa'id's efforts to re-organize sufi life were far-reaching. To him sympathy and compassion, rather than punishment, were the

[1] *Studies in Islamic mysticism*, p. 55.
[2] ibid, pp. 49–50. [3] ibid, p. 67.

most effective means to correct errors in disciples. He also popularized a high regard for spiritual directors and a belief in the power of their intercession on behalf of followers and friends.

> 'Whoever has seen me and has done good work for my family and disciples will be under the shadow of my intercession hereafter. I have prayed God to forgive my neighbours on the left, on the right, in front and behind, and He has forgiven them for my sake...My neighbours are Balkh and Marw and Nishapur and Herat. I am not speaking of those who live here (Mayhana)...I need not say a word on behalf of those around me. If any one has mounted an ass and passed by the end of this street, or has passed my house or will pass it, or if the light of my candle falls on him, the least thing that God will do with him is that He will have mercy upon him.'[1]

In order to regularize behaviour in different khanqahs, Shaikh Abu Sa'id outlined the following rules of discipline:

'1. Let them (the inmates) keep their garments clean and themselves always pure.
2. Let them not sit in the mosque or in any holy place for the sake of gossiping.
3. In the first instance let them perform their prayers in common.
4. Let them pray much at night.
5. At dawn let them ask forgiveness of God and call unto Him.
6. In the morning let them read as much of the *Qur'an* as they can, and let them not talk until the sun has risen.
7. Between evening prayers and bedtime prayers let them occupy themselves with repeating some litany (*Wirdi-u-zikri*).
8. Let them welcome the poor and needy and all who join their company, and let them bear patiently the trouble of (waiting upon) them.
9. Let them not eat anything save in participation with one another.
10. Let them not absent themselves without receiving permission from one another.'[2]

Large numbers of visitors came to the Shaikh's khanqah until 548/1153 when the invasion of the Ghuzz Turkic tribes completely devastated the region. Many of the Shaikh's own family were massacred by their conquerors.

One of Shaikh Abu Sa'id's ten most eminent disciples, Baba Sa'd Dust Dada, founded a khanqah in Baghdad. After being assigned the area of Baghdad as his spiritual domain, Dust Dada arrived there from

[1] *Studies in Islamic mysticism*, pp. 64-5. [2] ibid, p. 46.

Mayhana. He applied to the Caliph, al-Qa'im, (422/1031–467/1075), for land to build a khanqah on the banks of the Tigris, across the river in an uninhabited region. After receiving permission, a plot of about 200 square yards was selected by Dust Dada and he began collecting in a small bag, building material from dilapidated buildings nearby. Meanwhile a caravan of merchants and sufis arrived in Baghdad and at his request, camped on the land. Dust Dada would take his *zanbil*[1] into the town to beg food, and then offered it to the campers. At prayer times he would lead. Impressed with his charity and self-sacrifice, members of the caravan returned his hospitality by giving him a considerable amount of money. After their departure, Dust Dada proceeded to build a khanqah with a big covered platform, a *jama'at-khana* (assembly hall), kitchen and lavatory. Other buildings in the complex were a large arcaded mosque and a number of cells. When the caravan returned, Dust Dada again invited its members to his khanqah. They were amazed to find so many elegant buildings erected in such a short time. As before, the Shaikh begged food for his guests, and they again re-paid him liberally. This enabled him to complete the khanqah by adding a *hammam* (bath), more rooms and assembly halls. Later Dust Dada erected a bazaar of shops and a caravanserai in front of the khanqah's gateway.

This is the first detailed description of a khanqah complex which is available at the present time, however, all khanqahs were not built on such a grand scale; a few cells and a *jama'at-khana*, plus a mosque and a lavatory, were generally their main components. The fame of Dust Dada's khanqah attracted many sufis, and most of the people of Baghdad became his disciples. The Caliph, accompanied by his chief officials, also visited the khanqah where he was greatly impressed by the sight of more than fifty sufis praying in the *jama'at-khana*. It appears that after Dust Dada had made the Caliph his disciple, the latter entrusted the welfare of the all Baghdadi Muslims to him. This increased Dust Dada's popularity with the local people, and many requested him to act as a go-between when requesting favours from the Caliph, who built himself a palace near the khanqah complex. Dust Dada became known as the *Shaikh al-Shuyukh*, or chief sufi, of Baghdad. So great was his prestige that he was revered like a Caliph.[2]

Although Dust Dada's influence was profound, it was also fleeting. The emergence of other sufi orders in Baghdad eclipsed the fame of his successors. The story of Dust Dada is significant, however, as it serves to illustrate the interrelation between khanqahs, caravans, merchants and sufis.

Among early Persian sufi poets whose biographical details and writings

[1] Literally a basket made of palm leaves, technically a bag hung across the shoulder to collect food obtained by begging locally. The custom is obviously of Buddhist origin.

[2] *Asraru't-Tawhid*, pp. 362–67.

appear reasonably authentic was Baba Tahir. The major part of his life was spent in the area between Hamadan and Luristan. This region was ruled by the Shi'i Buwayhids[1] or Buyids. In 447/1055 when the Saljuq conqueror, Sultan Tughril, entered Hamadan, Baba Tahir was still alive, and is reported to have encountered Tughril, reproaching him saying: 'Oh Turk, how are you going to act towards the Muslims?'[2] In his verses Baba Tahir referred to himself as a wandering dervish (*darwish-i qalandar*), with no roof over his head, sleeping with a stone for a pillow, constantly harassed by spiritual anxieties.

From his writings Baba Tahir appears to be deeply in sympathy with the realities of life. He admitted that his eyes and heart found it difficult to detach themselves from the things of the world and that his soul was restless. He cried out:

> 'Art thou a lion, a panther, Oh my Heart,
> thou who are continually struggling with me.
> If thou fallest into my hands, I shall spill
> thy blood to see what colour thou art . . .'

One of Baba Tahir's mystic works, consisting of his Arabic maxims, *al-Kalimat al-Qisar* (Brief Sayings), has been published. The subjects he deals with are knowledge (*'ilm*), gnosis (*ma'rifa*), inspiration and penetration (*ilham* and *firasa*), reason and the soul (*'aql* and *nafs*), this world and beyond (*dunya* and *'uqba*), the musical performance (*sama'*), recollection (*zikr*), sincerity and spiritual retreat (*ikhlas* and *i'tikaf*). Later authors wrote several Arabic and Persian commentaries on the aphorisms contained in this work. V. Minorsky selected the following examples as an illustration of Baba Tahir's beliefs:

> 'Real knowledge is the intuition after the knowledge of certainty has been acquired . . . Ecstasy (*wajd*) is the loss (of the knowledge) of existing things and is the existence of lost things.'
> 'He who has been the witness of predestination (coming) from God remains without movement and without volition.'
> 'He whom ignorance has slain has never lived, he whom the *zikr* has killed will never die.'[3]

[1]The rise of this dynasty synchronized with the establishment of the Samanids in Khurasan. They first ruled in the Iranian plateau and then in Iraq. The founders of the dynasty came from the Daylamite region of the highlands of Gilan. From 320/932 to 454/1062, they ruled in Iran and Iraq, owing nominal allegiance to the 'Abbasid Caliphs. Mahmud of Ghazna weakened the Buwayhids, but their power was later revived. It was, however, the Saljuq, Tughril, 1038–63, who occupied Baghdad in 447/1055, and claimed to have liberated the Caliph from the overlordship of the Shi'i 'heretics.'

[2]Rawandi, *Rahatu's-Sudur*, London, 1921, p. 99.

[3]*Encyclopaedia of Islam* (new edition), I, p. 841.

However, the sufi poet whose impact was the greatest during the eleventh century was Khwaja Abu Isma'il 'Abdu'llah Ansari of Herat. He was born in the Herat citadel on 2 Sha'ban 396/4 May 1006 and died in the same city on 22 Zu'l-hijja 481/8 March 1089. His tomb in Gazirgah, about three miles north-east of Herat was first rebuilt by the Timurid ruler, Shah Rukh, (807/1405–850/1447) about 829/1425 and later was further embellished by other Timurid princes.

Herat, a city on the Hari Rud, in what is now western Afghanistan, then formed part of Khurasan, having submitted to the Arab governor of Khurasan in the middle of the seventh century AD. Strategically located on the trade routes between the Mediterranean Sea and India and China, Herat proved a natural source from which the fame of its leading sufi was to spread widely. Ansari was a trained theologian but after his conversion to sufism, disputes with the 'ulama' resulted in several attempts on his life. Finally his prestige and popularity helped to prevent further attacks. A large number of disciples were attracted to his lectures and he became known as Shaikhu'l-Islam (Leader of the Muslims). He was also known simply as the *Pir*, or spiritual director, of Herat.

Ansari's works both in prose and poetry, are of great significance amongst sufi literary works. His *Manazil al-Sa'irin* is more original than Qushairi's *Risala*. Ansari's *Tabaqat al-Sufiyya* was a rejuvenated work on Sulami's earlier book on which it was based. Jami's *Nafahatu'l-Uns* (Whispers of Confidence) was to later incorporate the whole of Harawi's *Tabaqat al-Sufiyya* and to up-date it. Ansari's short tracts on sufism represented a peak in the expression of sufi asceticism. In these tracts his style was unique; he joined short sentences of rhymed prose, interspersing them with verses, mostly of his own composition. Ansari's *Munajat* or Invocations, the greatest masterpiece written in Persian, features a conversation between God and a soul. Indeed it is unique in mystic literature. E.G. Browne's translation of a small section from the *Munajat* is as follows:

> 'O God! Two pieces of iron are taken from one spot, one becomes a horse-shoe and one a king's mirror. O God! Since Thou hadst the Fire of Separation, why didst Thou raise up the Fire of Hell? O God! I fancied that I knew Thee, but now I have cast my fancies into the water. O God! I am helpless and dizzy; I neither know what I have, nor have what I know!'

Here are two quatrains, which have been attributed to Ansari:

> 'Great shame it is to deem of high degree
> Thyself, or over others reckon thee;
> Strive to be like the pupil of thine eye—
> To see all else, but not thyself to see.'

'I need no wine nor cup: I'm drunk with Thee;
Thy quarry I, from other snares set free:
In Ka'ba and Pagoda Thee I seek:
Ka'ba, Pagoda, what are these to me?'[1]

The following extracts from Jogendra Singh's translation of Ansari's *Munajat* shows the typical ideas which were crystallizing in the sufi movement during the eleventh century:

'Know that the Prophet built an external Ka'ba
Of Clay and water,
And an inner Ka'ba in life and heart.
The outer Ka'ba was built by Abraham,
The Holy;
The inner is sanctified by the glory of
God Himself.'

'On the path of God
Two places of worship mark the stages.
The material temple,
And the temple of the heart.
Make your best endeavour
To worship at the temple of the heart.'

'Fasting only means the saving of bread,
Formal prayer is the business
Of old men and women,
Pilgrimage is a pleasure of the world.
Conquer the heart,
Its subjection is conquest indeed.'

'If thou canst walk on water
Thou art no better than a straw.
If thou canst fly in air
Thou art no better than a fly.
Conquer thy heart
That thou mayest become somebody.'

'One man spends seventy years in learning
And fails to kindle the light.
Another, all his life learns nothing
And hears one word
And is consumed by that word.'

[1] *A literary history of Persia*, II, p. 70.

'On this path argument is of no avail;
Seek, and thou mayest find the truth.'

'Helpless in childhood,
Intoxicated in youth,
And decrepit in old age;
Then, O helpless one, when couldst thou
Worship God?'[1]

During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries sufi poetry reached its highest peak in the form of *masnawis* or narrative poems. The three greatest exponents of this style were the sufi poets Sana'i, 'Attar and Rumi (or Maulawi).

Of these, Abu'l-Majd Majdud Sana'i, was born in Ghazna, or Balkh in the fifth/eleventh century and believed to have died in Ghazna in 525/1130–31. Browne, however, has suggested he died later, around 1150. Early in his career Sana'i was a court poet, competing with a galaxy of other Persian poets who wrote panegyrics to the Ghaznawid sultans. After some time, he relinquished his post, retiring to the life of a dervish.

As a means of expressing his feelings on meditation and the contemplative life, Sana'i used *ghazals* or couplets. His best-known epic is the *Hadiqatu'l-Haqiqa wa Shari'atu't-Tariqa* (The Garden of Truth and Law of the Way), from which a parable was quoted in the beginning of this chapter. Through anecdotes and allegories, Sana'i traced sufi theories on God, Muhammad, reason, gnosis, a carefree trust in God, heaven, philosophy and love. At the same time he related some of his own experiences.

The following extract from a *ghazal* by Sana'i illustrates the sufi way of expressing love of the Divine.

'That heart which stands aloof from pain and woe
No seal of signature of Love can show:
Thy Love, thy Love I chose, and as for wealth,
If wealth be not my portion, be it so!
For wealth, I ween, pertaineth to the World;
Ne'er can the World and Love together go!
So long as Thou dost dwell within my heart
Ne'er can my heart become the thrall of Woe.'[2]

Although Sana'i's work, *The Garden of Truth and Law of the Way*, was dedicated to Sultan Bahram Shah of Ghazna (1118–52), the author was not hoping for temporal rewards from his ruler. Perso-Islamic

[1] *The Persian mystics*, pp. 35-6.
[2] *A literary history of Persia*, II, p. 322.

political theory had made the role of Sultan an indispensable factor in the preservation of social stability and the freedom of Islamic practices. Sana'i was therefore not in a position to ignore his earthly ruler.

Faridu'd-Din Abu Hamid Muhammad 'Attar, the second great sufi poet, was originally a pharmacist and medical practitioner. His dates are the subject of heated disputes amongst scholars. It would seem that he was born in 537/1142–43, either in Nishapur or its neighbourhood, that he lived mostly in Nishapur and that he died there in 617/1220, the year the Mongols invaded the town.

'Attar was a prolific writer. Modern scholars have shown that during this period there were two writers called 'Attar in Nishapur, and a large number of works ascribed to Faridu'd-Din 'Attar were in fact written by the other 'Attar. However, the books which have authoritatively been ascribed to Faridu'd-Din are also extensive. The most important of these are a collection of *masnawis*, a *diwan* of *ghazals* and his famous compilation of the biographies of various leading sufis, entitled the *Tazkiratu'l-Auliya*', 'Attar's *ghazals* are highly ecstatic in flavour.

The anecdotes in 'Attar's *masnawis* were intended to call attention to mystical ideas on the acquisition of self knowledge and the attainment of *fana'*. One of his most famous *masnawis*, the *Mantiqu't-Tayr* (Conference of Birds), deals with the quest of a flock of birds for a mythical entity, the Simurgh or 'Phoenix.' The birds symbolize sufi pilgrims, while the Simurgh is God or the Truth. Under the guidance of a leader, the birds embark on a perilous journey. Their path is blocked by seven dangerous valleys: Quest, Love, Mystic-Knowledge, Detachment, Unification, Bewilderment and Fulfilment in Annihilation. Of the many different species, only thirty birds reach their goal. The survivors discover the Simurgh, at the same time finding themselves and becoming emerged with the divine Simurgh through annihilation. The end of 'Attar's *Masnawi* describes the sufi conception of annihilation in God (*fana' fi'llah*). In Browne's translation it reads this way:

> 'Through trouble and shame the souls of these birds were reduced to utter Annihilation, while their bodies became dust.
> Being thus utterly purified of all, they all received Life
> from the Light of the (Divine) Presence.
> Once again they became servants with souls renewed;
> once again in another way were they overwhelmed with astonishment.
> Their ancient deeds and undeeds were cleansed away
> and annihilated from their bosoms.
> The Sun of Propinquity shone forth from them;
> the souls of all of them were illuminated by its rays.
> Through the reflection of the faces of these thirty birds (*si-murgh*) of the world they then beheld the countenance of the *Simurgh*.
> When they looked, that was the *Simurgh*:

without doubt that *Simurgh* was those thirty birds (*si-murgh*).
All were bewildered with amazement, not knowing
whether they were this or that.
They perceived themselves to be naught else but the *Simurgh*,
while the *Simurgh* was naught else than the thirty birds (*si-murgh*).
When they looked towards the *Simurgh*,
it was indeed the *Simurgh* which was there;
While when they looked towards themselves
they were *si-murgh* (thirty birds), and that was the *Simurgh*;
And if they looked at both together,
both were the *Simurgh*, neither more nor less.
This one was that, and that one this;
the like of this hath no one heard in the world.
All of them were plunged in amazement,
and continued thinking without thought.
Since they understood naught of any matter,
without speech they made enquiry of the Presence.
They besought the disclosure of this deep mystery,
and demanded the solution of we-ness and thou-ness.
Without speech came the answer from that Presence,
saying: 'This Sun-like Presence is a Mirror.'
Whosoever enters it sees himself in It,
in It he sees body and soul, soul and body.
Since ye came hither thirty birds (*si-murgh*),
ye appeared as thirty in this Mirror.
Should forty or fifty birds come,
they too would discover themselves.
Though many more had been added to your numbers,
ye yourselves see, and it is yourself you have looked on.'[1]

In the *Masnawi* of Jalalu'd-Din Rumi, mystic poetry was to reach its greatest heights. The third of the outstanding sufi poets, like the others, Sana'i and 'Attar, Rumi was both a mystic and a poet. He was also known by the name Maulana or Mevlana. Jalalu'd-Din Rumi was born at Balkh in Rabi' I 604/September 1207, his father Baha'u'd-Din Walad, was a preacher who, in 614/1217 was forced to emigrate from Balkh because of friction with Khwarazm-Shah. The reasons for this were probably both political and religious. In 626/1228, the family settled in Quniya. Baha'u'd-Din died there three years later.

To further his education, Jalalu'd-Din visited Aleppo and Damascus, but his main interest was sufism. In 642/1244 Shamsu'd-Din Muhammad Tabrizi, the wandering dervish, visited Quniya. Jalalu'd-Din fell deeply in love with Shamsu'd-Din, finding in him the perfect image of the

[1] *A literary history of Persia*, II, pp. 514-15.

Divine Beloved, and took him into his home. There Jalalu'd-Din's love was channelled into the spiritual satisfaction of writing poetry, and his new-found obsession unwittingly resulted in the large-scale neglect of his own disciples. Learning of a conspiracy by these disciples to have him killed, Shamsu'd-Din fled to Damascus in 643/1246. He was brought back to Quniya, however, by Sultan Walad, Jalalu'd-Din's son, and in 645/1247 was secretly murdered by Jalalu'd-Din's disciples and members of his family, his body later being thrown down a well. Grief-stricken at his loved one's absence, and ignorant of his death, Jalalu'd-Din went twice to Damascus. After a fruitless search, he poured his loss and anguish into ecstatic poetry, in which he finally managed to re-discover both his lost Beloved and his own peace of mind. Jalalu'd-Din Rumi died in Quniya in Jumada II, 672/December, 1273.

During his lifetime, Rumi invented the famous whirling dance through which dervishes could achieve ecstasy. This was accompanied by lamenting reed pipes and beating drums. The order he founded was known as the Mevlevi or the Mawlawiyya, and its outstanding feature was its dancing dervishes. The order became significant in Turkey; in 1332 when Ibn Battuta visited Quniya he found it flourishing under the name, Jalaliyya.[1] The devotion of members of the order to music and dancing is responsible for their being known in Europe as 'whirling dervishes.'

Jalalu'd-Din's *Diwan* contains *ghazals* and *ruba'is*. A large number of *ghazals* have the name Shams or Shams-i Tabriz as their *takhallus* or *nom de plume*. The dominant theme in the *Diwan* is the ecstatic love of God. But Jalalu'd-Din's real masterpiece was his *Masnawi*, which was divided into six books and contains about 26,660 couplets. It was begun after urgings from the Mawlana's favourite disciple, Husamu'd-Din Chelebi. The verses were dictated by Jalalu'd-Din whenever he was in the grip of ecstasy—sometimes while he was dancing, sometimes while he was sitting or walking. On occasions he would dictate all night.

There is no clear structure in the *Masnawi*. The stories are interspersed with mystical ideals and sufi didactics. Overall, the diction is spontaneous and informal, yet the tales betray a serious note. A story of God's rebuke to Moses for his indignation at the rough idiom invoked by a lowly shepherd during prayer may give some insight into the spirit contained in Rumi's great work.

'A revelation came to Moses from God—
"Thou hast parted My servant from Me."
Didst thou come (as a prophet) to unite or
didst thou come to sever?
So far as thou canst, do not set foot in separation;
of all things the most hateful to Me is divorce.

[1] *Travels of Ibn Battuta*, tr. by H.A.R. Gibb, II, London, 1962, p. 431.

I have bestowed on every one a (special) way of acting;
I have given to everyone a (peculiar) form of expression.
In regard to him it is (worthy of) praise, and
in regard to him honey, and in regard to thee poison.
I am independent of all purity and impurity,
of all slothfulness and alacrity (in worshipping Me).
I did not ordain (divine worship) that I might make any profit;
nay, but that I might do a kindness to (My) servants.
In the Hindoos the idiom of Hind (India) is praiseworthy;
in the Sindians the idiom of Sind is praiseworthy.
I am not sanctified by their glorification (of Me);
'tis they that become sanctified and pearl-scattering
(pure and radiant).
I look not at the tongue and the speech;
I look at the inward (spirit) and the state (of feeling).[1]

The Silsilas

The twelfth century saw the crystallization of the new silsilas, or orders, as chains of lineages through which different sufis could be traced. The establishment of silsilas placed sufism on a firm and organized basis, and at the same time, was an attempt to make the movement more meaningful to individual sufis. It connected them with a spiritual hierarchy, thus giving sufis greater respectability and a stronger base of defence against the onslaught of the orthodox.

The founders of the silsilas in the twelfth century linked themselves with Muhammad through either 'Ali or Abu Bakr, but generally through the former. In spite of some serious differences over the question of orthodoxy, the main emphasis of the silsilas was on continual meditation of the verses of the Qur'an and on different names of Allah. Gradually many sufi sayings were intermingled with the traditions of Muhammad.

Influences, such as Neo-Platonism, the monastic tradition of Buddhism and Christianity, and Vedantist and Yogic philosophy were all Islamized by members of silsilas in such a way as to make them virtually unidentifiable. Moreover, sufis in these orders transformed mystical exercises, which they used to achieve union with God, into an organized framework. There were many innovations, all aimed towards making the *Tariqa* or path of sufism, more effective to its followers. Each silsila devised its own method or school of guidance as well as its own rituals and ceremonies. Later generations were to follow these rules rigidly.

Although the charisma of the early founders of the silsilas and an adherence to strict discipline, helped to curb charlatanism and anti-

[1] R.A. Nicholson (translator), *The Mathnawi of Jalal ud-din Rumi*, II, London, 1926, pp. 311-12.

nomian tendencies, the sufi movement in all parts of the Islamic world tended to become a legalistic system, obsessed with authoritarianism. Only within conventional forms could personal and individual enlightenment be expressed. Poetry alone offered an outlet for the expression of individualistic mystical experiences.

From the twelfth to the end of the fourteenth centuries, the sufi silsilas served in Iran as a bulwark against the pessimism aroused by the onslaught of the Ghuzz and the Mongols. They re-orientated religious life away from strict and often meaningless formalities. However their passivity and serenity did not become inertia. Only in their later degenerate state were some silsilas extravagant and demoralized. The members of the degenerate silsilas instituted saint worship, which precipitated a high degree of gullibility regarding the miraculous powers of different saints. The repetition of *zikr* became artificial; music and stylized dances, designed to produce ecstasy, were reduced to entertainment. Sufism became a popular cult, its poetic inspiration lost creativity and the mystical concept of love became sexual. However, at times these aspects of sufism were rejuvenated by far-sighted and genuinely spiritual directors. The history of the silsilas is thus marked by the perennial rise and fall of true spirituality.

The most popular silsilas in the East were based in Baghdad, Iran, Khurasan and Transoxiana. Many important founders of orders in Baghdad were Iranis who had been greatly influenced by the Baghdadi system of mystic legalism. These men absorbed the main features of the earlier sufi schools of sufism, at the same time relegating them into the background through the development of new frameworks of their own.

The founder of the Qadiriyya silsila was Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani. 'Abdu'l-Qadir was born in 470/1077–78 in the village of Jilan, south of the Caspian Sea. His father Abi Salih Jangi Dust was also an Irani. When eighteen years of age, 'Abdu'l-Qadir migrated to Baghdad. There he studied law, *Hadis*, and philology under a number of eminent scholars. His interest in sufism was sparked off by Abu'l-Khair Hammad al-Dabbas who died in 523/1129, however, he obtained his *khirqa* from al-Mukharrimi.

Before appearing as a public preacher at Baghdad in 521/1127, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir spent about twenty-five years as a wandering dervish, the last eleven, in complete seclusion. After this, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir succeeded al-Mukharrimi as head of a seminary in Baghdad. He became highly popular as a theologian, rather than as a sufi. He himself managed to combine the life of the *madrasa* with that of the khanqah. At fifty-one he married. The rest of his life Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir divided between Baghdad and Jil, a small town between Baghdad and Wasit.

The collections of the Shaikh's sermons, *al Fath al-Rabbani*, comprising sixty-two of them and the *Futuh al-Ghaib*, containing seventy-eight

sermons, are well known to Islamic readers. His writings present Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir as a sober preacher who avoided sufi terminology and moralized in simple, coherent language. He strongly condemned the materialistic life of his contemporaries, urging them to develop a balanced personality by adhering to both their material and spiritual well-being. A *jihad* fought against self-will was, to Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir, far superior to that waged with the sword. Through this struggle the idolatry of the self and the worship of created things (the hidden *shirk*) could be vanquished. Developing the idea of crushing desire, in a sermon Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir advised his audience that seekers of God had to be indifferent towards even the life hereafter and to cultivate pleasure only in the thought of annihilation and abiding poverty in this life.[1] In further sermons he said that good and evil were two fruits emerging from two branches of a single tree. One of the branches yielded sweet fruit and the other bitter; it would be wise therefore for people to move to areas where the sweet fruit were to be found.

Like Shaikh Abu Sa'id, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir believed that the ideal sufi was not a recluse but a man involved in the world, giving example to others. Obedience to religious law was the first stage of a spiritual development leading to piety. The state of reality, equivalent to that of saintliness (*wilaya*), was the second stage. At such a stage the saint protected himself from all sins including those which were hidden and obeyed his inner voice. The third stage was that of resignation, in which the saint completely surrendered to God. The fourth and final stage was *fana'* which was achieved, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir believed in the form of a pure union, accompanied by knowledge.[2]

The expansion of the Qadiriyya order was very slow; in many parts of the Islamic world, the legends associated with Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir played an important role in its development. His eminence was enshrined in the belief that he was superior to everyone of God's saints.[3] The legendary life of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir is filled with incomprehensible miracles and supernatural feats. He is alleged to have crushed mountains, dried up oceans and raised the dead to life. It is claimed that a large number of Jews and Christians embraced Islam through the influence of his spiritual prowess. Magical and esoteric teachings were also associated with Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani and such practices form an integral part of the beliefs of the Javanese Qadiris who, even today, perform supernatural feats accompanied by beating drums. Whatever his alleged

[1]Mehmmed Ali Aini and E.J. Simore Munir, *'Abd-Al-Kadir Gilani*, Paris, 1967, pp. 20–35; D.S. Margoliouth, *Contributions to the biography of 'Abd al-Kadir, after al-Zahabi's work*, *JRAS*, 1907, pp. 267-316.

[2]'Abd al-Qadir, *Futuh al-Ghaib*, with a Persian commentary by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq, Lucknow, 1881; *Discourses*, pp. 17–8, 40, 46.

[3]He is reported to have said: 'My foot is on the neck of every saint of God.'

supramundane powers, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir died an earthly death in 561/1166.[1]

Towards the end of the eleventh century, Abu Hamid bin Muhammad al Ghazali Tusi's brother, Ahmad al-Ghazali, was in Baghdad making his mark as a sufi teacher. In 488/1095 Shaikh Ahmad succeeded his brother as a professor at the Nizamiyya seminary in Baghdad, but unlike his brother, Shaikh Ahmad's overwhelming concern was for a life of mysticism. Initiated into sufism in Tus by Abu 'Ali al-Farmazi, Ahmad al-Ghazali's sermons attracted large audiences. These were compiled into a two-volume work, of which only extracts survive. Like the martyr Hallaj, Shaikh Ahmad, defended the monotheism of Iblis. Later in his life he migrated to Qazwin where he died in 520/1126.[2]

Among Ahmad's disciples, the best known was Shaikh Ziya'u'd-Din Abu'n-Najib as-Suhrawardi. He was born in 490/1097 at Suhraward, to the west of Sultaniya, in the province of al-Jibal (the Mountains). The Greeks called this province, stretching from the Mesopotamian plains on the west to the great desert of Iran, Media. From the ninth century, the province became known as Iraq 'Ajami or Iranian Iraq, as distinct from the Iraq of the Arabs in Lower Mesopotamia. In Suhrawardi's youth, the fame of Shaikh Ahmad al-Ghazali prompted him to migrate to Baghdad to become his disciple. At a ruined site on the bank of the Tigris, Abu'n-Najib built a khanqah. He wrote a work in Arabic, the *Adab al-Muridin*, which a number of Indian sufis later translated into Persian. Shaikh Abu'n-Najib died in 563/1168.[3]

Among the contemporaries of Shaikh Abu'n-Najib, and a disciple of Shaikh Ahmad al-Ghazali, was the sufi martyr, Abu'l-Ma'ali 'Abdu'llah ibn Abi Bakr Muhammad ibn 'Ali ibn al-Hasan ibn al-Miyanji, better known as 'Ainu'l-Quzat of Hamadan. Born in 492/1098, 'Ainu'l-Quzat's family were originally natives of Miyana in Azerbaijan, a town between Maragha and Tabriz. His grandfather seems to have migrated to Hamadan, in central Iran, and both 'Ainu'l-Quzat's grandfather and father were highly educated and held posts as qazis. In his youth, 'Ainu'l-Quzat exchanged his life of affluence for that of a sufi engaged in writing mystical poetry and prose. Ahmad al-Ghazali became 'Ainu'l-Quzat's teacher, and they exchanged correspondence until the former's death in 520/1126.

Both Ahmad al-Ghazali and 'Ainu'l-Quzat belonged to the Junaid school of sufism. Contrary to the Junaid's tradition of *sahw* (sobriety),

[1]G.W.J. Drewes, *De mirakelen van Abdoelkadir Djaelani*, door G.W.J. Drewes, and Poetbatjaraka, Bandoeng, 1938; A summary of contents, in places amounting to almost a complete translation of the Javanese version of *Hikayat Abdul-Qadir Jilani* which is based on al-Yafe'i's Arabic *Khulasat al-Mafakhir*.

[2]For his biography see al-Subki, *Al-Tabaqat al-Sufiyya*, Cairo, 1324/1906–07, IV, 54; *Ibn Khallikan*, IV, p. 54.

[3]*Ibn Khallikan*, I, pp. 535-36; Subki, IV, pp. 256-57; *NU*, p. 417.

however, they were both given to *sukr* (mystic intoxication). 'Ainu'l-Quzat excelled his preceptor and became a totally rapt mystic. His writings aroused orthodox fury and he was thrown into prison in Baghdad by the Saljuqid vizier of Iran, al-Dargazini. There 'Ainu'l-Quzat wrote a short treatise in his own defence, which has been translated into English by A.J. Arberry and called *Apologia*. He argued that his doctrine of *fana'* was neither pantheism nor incarnationism (*hulul*) as it merely involved the passing away of the contingent being into God's Being. He affirmed that his writings were not different to those of earlier sufis but were founded on those of the orthodox Abu Hamid al-Ghazali. His arguments, however, failed to save his life. On 6–7 Jumada II, 525/6–7 May 1131, 'Ainu'l-Quzat was martyred at the age of thirty-three.

During his lifetime a large number of disciples had gathered around 'Ainu'l-Quzat, but the order he founded did not long survive. His works, however, were regarded as the epitome of sufi truth, the most popular being the *Tamhidat* (Introduction). Following are some challenging passages, translated by A.J. Arberry:

> 'That mad lover whom you call Iblis in this world—do you not know by what name he is called in the divine world? If you know his name, by calling him by that name you know yourself an unbeliever. Alas, what do you hear? This mad one loved God. Do you know what came as the touchstone of his love? One, affliction and oppression; two, reproach and humiliation. They said; "You lay claim to love Us. There must be a token." They offered him the touchstone of affliction and oppression, of reproach and humiliation. He accepted. Immediately these two touchstones bore witness that the token of love is truthfulness. Will you never understand what I am saying? In love there must be cruelty, and there must be fidelity, so that the lover may be ripened by the kindness and oppression of the Beloved; else he will remain immature, and nothing will come from him.'[1]

The founder of the Suhrawardiyya order, however, was Shaikh Abu'n-Najib's nephew, Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Abu Hafs al-Suhrawardi. This order spread throughout many parts of the Islamic world and became one of the two most significant orders of early sufism in India.

Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi was born in Rajab 539/January 1145. He learnt theology from Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani and a number of other prominent theologians, but was initiated into sufism by his uncle. As a youth Shihabu'd-Din encountered vigorous opposition from the greatest Hanbali theologian in Baghdad, Abdu'r-Rahman ibn al-Jawzi (510/1126–597/1200), who was also an interpreter of *Fiqh* and a defender of *Hadis*. This prolific author and preacher enjoyed the total support of

[1]A.J. Arberry, *A Sufi martyr*, London, 1969, p. 100.

many of the successive 'Abbasid Caliphs and was given by them what amounted virtually to inquisitorial powers. Ibn al-Jawzi[1] accused Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani of furthering the cause of philosophy and heresy. Of his works *Naqd al-'Ilm wa'l-'ulama'* and *Talbis Iblis*, translated as 'The Devil's Delusion' by Margoliouth, not only condemned non-Sunni sects but attacked a large number of Sunni jurisconsults, traditionalists and sufis including Abu Talib al-Makki, Qushairi and Ghazali.

Caliph al-Nasir (575/1179–622/1225) reversed the policy of blind support for Ibn al-Jawzi, and this resulted in a new middle-of-the road policy as outlined by Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi. The Caliph despatched the Shaikh as his ambassador to the courts of the 'Ayyubid al-Malik al-'Adil I Saifu'd-Din (596/1200–615/1218) in Egypt, of the Khwarazm-Shah, 'Ala'u'd-Din Muhammad (596/1200–617/1220) and of the Saljuq ruler of Quniya, 'Ala'u'd-Din Kay-Qubaz I (616/1219–634/1237). Al-Nasir also built an extensive khanqah for Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din and his family, which included additions such as a bath-house and a garden.

The Shaikh's travels also included journeys to prominent sufi centres in Iran, Khurasan, Transoxiana, Syria and Turkey. He made several pilgrimages to Mecca, and died in 632/1234–35.[2]

During his lifetime the Shaikh wrote several books. The most popular was the *'Awarifu'l-Ma'arif*. This work marks a watershed in the reconciliation of sufism with orthodoxy. To later generations of sufis it became the most closely studied text on sufism. 'Izzu'd-Din Mahmud bin 'Ali of Kashan (d. 753/1352–53) wrote a book called the *Misbahu'l-Hidaya wa Miftahu'l-Kifaya* in Persian based on the *'Awarifu'l-Ma'arif*, which he rearranged slightly and to which he added some new material.

In the *'Awarifu'l-Ma'arif*, Suhrawardi corrects Sarraj who had tried to prove that the word 'sufi' was used in pre-Islamic Arabic.[3] According to Suhrawardi the word was the product of a period of political change and unrest. On etymological grounds he rejects the idea that the word was derived from *suffa* but accepts the fact that the life of Muhammad's companions at the Medina mosque, 'the People of the Verandah,' resembled those of later sufis. He makes an interesting reference to a class of Khurasan sufis who lived in caves and were called *Shikaftiyyah* (from the word *shikaft*, cave). His description implies that that particular mode of life was based on the life-pattern of a section of Buddhist monks.[4] Derivation of the word sufi from *suf* (wool), meaning those who wore a woollen garment was, according to him, affirmed by the Prophet.

[1]For his works see *Mu'allafat Ibn ul-Jawzi* by 'Abdu'l-Hamid al-'Aluji, Baghdad, 1385/1965; Brockelmann, I, 656-66 and Supplement, I, 914-20.

[2]For his biography see Ibn Khallikan, II, no. 95; *NU*, p. 472; Jalalu'd-Din Huma'i, *Misbahu'l-Hidaya*, pp. 28-32.

[3]al-Sarraj, *Kitab al-Luma'*, London, 1963, p. 22.

[4]Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi, *'Awarif al-Ma'arif*, on the margin of *Ihya al-'Ulum*, I, Cairo, 1957, pp. 326-36.

Using Qur'anic verses to support his theory, Suhrawardi shows that knowledge, not in the legalistic exoteric sense, but in the spiritual esoteric sense, is the basis of sufism. He applies the Qur'anic term of *Al Rasikhun fi al-'Ilm* (Those Firmly Rooted in Knowledge) to those whose hearts have a total perception of the Truth. This knowledge cannot be learnt in school but is a legacy from the prophets and can be acquired only from them. To Suhrawardi, sufis were divided into two categories: the first were those whose mystical insight was framed around their own spiritual perception; the second consisted of those whose supernatural enlightenment was the result of their own self-mortification.[1] He quoted Junaid saying that what leads to sufism is not reason and intellectual discussion but hunger, renunciation and abstention from even that which was lawful.

In the *'Awarifu'l-Ma'arif*, however, Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din reminded sufis that the mystic *Tariqa* was not identical to either *faqr* (poverty) or *zuhd* (asceticism), although these could lead to *fana'*. To him an obsessive opposition to wealth was a sign of weakness, amounting to a dependence on causation and an attachment to the anticipation of reward. A true sufi did not differentiate between poverty and wealth and was concerned with neither fear nor the need for recompense.[2]

Like other orthodox sufis, the Shaikh considered people misguided who believed that gnosis absolved them from a need to obey *Shari'a*. The law and *Haqiqa* (Reality) were interdependent. Similarly Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi condemned sufis who, following the analogy of the divine and human aspects of Christ's personality, believed in the doctrine of incarnation (*hulul*). Sufis who spoke of submerging themselves into the ocean of Divine Unity, said the Shaikh, were misdirected. Precedence should be given to fulfilling the divine will.

Discussing the Qur'anic verse: 'They will ask thee concerning the Spirit. Say: The Spirit is by command of my Lord, and of knowledge ye have been vouchsafed but little,'[3] Suhrawardi said that the spirit is neither eternal nor subsistent, but created and an attribute of God. The animal spirit of man was connected with the digestive organism of the body but the heavenly spirit belonged to the world of command. When it overpowered the baser spirit it transmuted the second nature of the latter and the two were fused; human beings were then able to receive divine inspiration.[4]

According to the *'Awarifu'l-Ma'arif*, all immoral activities emanated from the lower self (*nafs*), and reason and patience controlled its natural impulses such as rage and lust. The desire for evil (*ammara*), repentance

[1]Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi, *'Awarif al-Ma'arif*, on the margin of *Ihya al-'Ulum*, IV, Cairo, 1957, pp. 202-68.

[2]ibid, II, pp. 356-59.

[3]*Qur'an*, XVII, 85.

[4]*'Awarifu'l Ma'arif*, IV, pp. 255-65.

(*lawwama*) and satisfaction (*mutma'ina*) represented three different stages in the development and gradual purification of the *nafs*.

The heart (*qalb*), Suhrawardi believed was different to the rest of the human body although it was a part of it. The heart of a true believer (*mu'min*) was like a pure soul and was illuminated by a shining light; but the heart of the unbeliever, said the Shaikh, was dark and made of a lowly substance. The heart of the hypocrite was shrouded in a veil, and a many-faceted heart was one which was inclined towards both good and evil.[1]

Reason, to Suhrawardi, was an innate human talent which prompted man to acquire different kinds of knowledge. It was supplemented and supported by *Shari'a*. Spiritual perception helped man to adopt a middle-of-the road policy and obtain knowledge of the heavenly spheres (*malakut*). Thus one could acquire an understanding of the world of matter and space, as well as of the earthly world and the Unseen. If reason was not supported and supplemented by the light of Islamic law, man could prosper in the world, but not obtain blessings from the spiritual world.

Only true mystics, believed Suhrawardi, were able to discriminate between experiences emanating from the lower soul, from God, from Satan and from the angels. One dependant on an impure source for their existence was always a victim of evil influences; it was, therefore, a sufi's duty to foster a balanced detachment from the material world, to mortify the flesh and to constantly observe ascetic practices.[2]

State (*hal*) and stage (*maqam*) were two technical terms of sufism which should not be confused, said the Shaikh. State involved a changing psychological condition, while stage was relatively permanent. For example, in the beginning a novice adopted an attitude of meditation. This however, was not a permanent feature of his mystic journey but a state of *hal*. When an attitude of contemplation became an enduring feature the neophyte reached the second stage. He then passed to the third stage which was observation (*mushahada*). This enabled him to understand the secrets of the spiritual world. Both divine grace and personal effort played complementary roles in progress towards the true mystic state.[3]

Suhrawardi made a detailed criticism of *fana'* and *baqa'* thus clarifying the prevailing confusion amongst sufis. The first stage of *fana'* was an obvious one. In it the mystic felt he possessed no freedom of action or choice as everything emanated from God. The second was the stage of real annihilation involving a perception of receiving illumination from the divine attribute and His Essence. At this stage the divine command dominated him to such a degree that no evil influence could affect him.

[1] *'Awarifu'l Ma'arif*, IV, pp. 266-69.
[2] ibid, pp. 197-250.
[3] ibid, pp. 281-98.



Sufi Sama 'from the *Majalisu'l-'Ushshaq'* by Sultan Husain written in 908/1502-03. Miniature from Bodleian MS. dated 959/1552, Ouseley Add 24, f. 119 R.

It was not essential that in the state of *fana'*, mystics lost all consciousness. With the acquisition of the state of *baqa'* (abiding in God) a sufi regained his power of action; he could then perform duties for the earthly and the spiritual worlds with equanimity. Persistent self-examination, introversion, contemplation, patience, submission to God's will and an attitude of complete detachment enabled a mystic to practise self-mortification. In reality this process was one of self-purification, and a second birth from the womb of the spirit to the kingdom of a newly-awakened spirit.[1]

The most important section of the *'Awarifu'l-Ma'arif* by Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi was a detailed discussion of sufi ethics and the mystic ways of life. This section was a marked improvement over related chapters in Hujwiri's *Kashf al-Mahjub*; Suhrawardi could make an outstanding contribution on this very important subject for by the twelfth century khanqah life was at its highest peak.

Suhrawardi admitted that the establishment of khanqahs was an innovation, but saw in them the germs of the *suffa* life at the time of Muhammad. He believed that the advantages of established khanqahs were great. Firstly, they offered board and lodging to sufis who were often without financial resources of any kind. Secondly, the corporate life of a khanqah provided an opportunity for individual members who shared a close relationship to exchange views and experiences. Finally, the propinquity of life in a khanqah provided for a healthy rivalry between sufis in the perfection of their morals and conduct. Like Hujwiri, Suhrawardi divided the people of khanqahs into two: residents and travellers. According to the Shaikh, the latter, generally wandering dervishes, should reach the khanqah before afternoon prayers, and if late, should spend the night in a mosque. A warm welcome to the visitor should be extended by the residents and the best food offered to them by the khanqah steward. The travellers should not be pestered with questions, although resident sufis should themselves answer all queries. If a dervish entered who was ignorant of khanqah customs and the traditions of sufi life, he should not be expelled.

Khanqah residents were of three types. The first group contained members of the novice or servant class who were assigned to such duties as waiting on others, which enabled them to become acquainted with the company of mystics and to be initiated in humility. Service enabled novices to rise to the second group of mystics who learnt the social ethics of sufism. Members of the third category were aged sufis, generally living in seclusion, who were entirely dedicated to prayers and meditation. In a khanqah, the young should live communally in the *jama'at-khana*, allowing older sufis to reside privately in cells. According to Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din there were two sources of income for a khanqah—endowments and begging.

[1] *'Awarifu'l Ma'arif*, IV, pp. 455-65.

The head of the khanqah was the Shaikh, the others were the *ikhwan* or brethren. Inmates should co-operate and take food communally. Differences between sufis should be overcome and there should be no hypocrisy in relationships, for a true mystic constantly sought a pure heart, undarkened by malice.[1]

Shaikh Suhrawardi believed the periodic retirement of sufis to retreats to be a later innovation, but considered the custom of great assistance in self-examination and meditation. He divided recluses into three: the weakest, who broke their fasts every evening; the above average sufi who took nourishment on alternate nights and the strongest, who ate only on the third.[2]

Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din admitted that the wearing of the *khirqa* or sufi robe was also an accretion, but saw it as a symbol of the radical aspect of sufi life. According to him, it identified the wearer as one who was outside the mainstream of life, who did not indulge in fine raiment and rich food. As sufism was founded on a belief in the transmission of *wilaya* or saintship, the granting of a *khirqa* was significant for it was a sign that the recipient had, according to his *pir*, reached a satisfactory religious standard.

The granting of a *khirqa* was categorized by Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din as: one awarded in recognition of a disciple's personal spiritual achievement or one given by a Shaikh to a person seeking the blessings which surrounded it. There was no necessity for those in the second group to be sufi disciples, but they should at least observe the *Shari'a* and keep company with sufis. After the receipt of a *khirqa* the blessings accrued from it might lead to a total acceptance of the mystic path.[3]

On the controversial subject of *sama'*, the Shaikh was lengthy. Conflicting views of *sama'* (literally, 'audition'), from different sufis were detailed by him in the *'Awarifu'l-Ma'arif*. Overall, the Shaikh supported the practice, but prescribed its performance under strict rules, to prevent a degeneration into the use of music and dancing to promote licentiousness.[4] However, the Shaikh was unable to excel Hujwiri's unique means of defending *sama'* who says:

> 'In short, all foot-play (*pay-bazi*) is bad in law and reason, by whomsoever it is practised, and the best of mankind cannot possibly practise it; but when the heart throbs with exhilaration and rapture becomes intense and the agitation of ecstasy is manifested and

[1] *'Awarifu'l Ma'arif*, IV, pp. 80-99.

[2] ibid, pp. 310-32.

[3] *'Awarifu'l Ma'arif*, II, pp. 42-62.

[4] ibid, pp. 220–79. For some important views on the subject see Qushairi, *Al-Rasa'il al-Qushairiyya*, Karachi, 1964, pp. 50–65; D.B. Macdonald, 'Emotional religion in Islam as affected by music and singing,' *JRAS*, 1901, pp. 195–252, 705–48; 1902, pp. 1–28.

> conventional forms are gone, that agitation (*iztirab*) is neither dancing nor foot-play nor bodily indulgence, but a dissolution of the soul. Those who call it "dancing" are utterly wrong. It is a state that cannot be explained in words: "without experience no knowledge."'[1]

The fame of Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din was matched only by that of Abu'l-Jannab Ahmad bin 'Umar al-Khiwaqi, better known as Najmu'd-Din Kubra. A galaxy of sufis surrounded him as disciples and a number of branches of his order, the Kubrawiyya, spread to Baghdad, Khurasan and India. The two Indian branches were the Firdawsiyya and the Hamadaniyya; the Baghdadi branch was the Nuriyya and the Khurasani branches were the Rukniyya, the Ightishashiyya and the Nurbakhshiyya. Shaikh Abu'l-Jannab Ahmad has aptly been called 'the Carver of Saints' (Shaikh-i Wali Tarash).[2]

Shaikh Najmu'd-Din Kubra was born in Khwarazm in 540/1145-46. In his youth he left Khwarazm for Hamadan to study *Hadis*, a traditional pursuit for one who planned to become an *'alim*. Later he went to Tabriz and Alexandria also to study *Hadis* but there he had a spiritual experience which led him to adopt sufism. Shaikh Najmu'd-Din went to Khuzistan and became the disciple of Shaikh Isma'il Qasri (d. 589/1193). On his preceptor's advice, Najmu'd-Din later entered into the discipleship of Shaikh 'Ammar ibn Yasir al-Bidlisi (died about 597/1200–01), a friend of Abu'n-Najib Suhrawardi. Shaikh Kubra then went to Cairo, completing his final course in sufi discipline under Shaikh Ruzbihan al-Wazzan of Kazirun (d. 584/1188) and married Ruzbihan's daughter.

The genealogy of Shaikh Kubra's *pirs* begins with 'Ali and his disciple Kumail bin Ziyad, and ends with Shaikh Isma'il Qasri. It is noteworthy that his *pirs* were either companions of Abu'n-Najib Suhrawardi or his disciples.

Kubra finally settled in Khwarazm where he built a khanqah. Among his disciples there, the most eminent were Majdu'd-Din Baghdadi, (died either in 606/1209–10 or in 616/1219–20), 'Attar's *pir*, Sa'dud'd-Din Hamawi (d. 650/1253), the author of several works on sufism, Najmu'd-Din Daya (d. 654/1256), who wrote the famous sufi book, the *Mirsadu'l 'Ibad* (Watch Tower of God's Servants). A unique personality among Kubra's disciples was Saifu'd-Din Bakharzi, who will be dealt with more fully in Chapter Three.

In 618/1221, the Mongol invasion of Khwarazm took a great toll of life, including that of Shaikh Kubra. Jami gives the following graphic account of his death:

> 'When the Tartar heathen reached Khwarazm, the Shaikh assembled

[1] Nicholson, p. 416. [2] *NU*, p. 419.

his disciples, whose number exceeded sixty. Sultan Muhammad Khwarazm-Shah had fled, but the Tartar heathen supposed him to be still in Khwarazm, whither consequently they marched. The Shaikh summoned certain of his disciples, such as Shaikh Sa'du'd-Din Hamawi, Raziu'd-Din 'Ali Lala and others, and said, "Arise quickly and depart to your own countries, for a Fire is kindled from the East which consumes nearly to the West. . . Some of his disciples said, "How would it be if your Holiness were to pray that perhaps this (catastrophe) may be averted from the lands of Islam. . "Nay," replied the Shaikh, "this is a thing irrevocably predetermined which prayer cannot avert." Then his disciples besought him, saying, "The beasts are ready prepared for the journey: if your Holiness also would join us and depart into Khurasan, it would not be amiss." "Nay," replied the Shaikh, "here shall I die a martyr, for it is not permitted to me to go forth." So his disciples departed into Khurasan.

So when the heathen entered the city, the Shaikh called together such of his disciples as remained, and said, "Arise in God's Name, and let us fight in God's Cause." Then he entered his house, put on his *khirqa*. . .girded up his loins, filled the upper part of his *khirqa*, which was open in front, with stones on both sides, took a spear in his hand, and came forth. And when he came face to face with the heathen, he continued to cast stones at them till he had no stones left. The heathen fired volleys of arrows at him, and an arrow pierced his breast. He plucked it out and cast it away, and therewith passed away his spirit. They say that at the moment of his martyrdom he had grasped the pigtail of one of the heathen, which after his death could not be removed from his hand, until at last they were obliged to cut it off.'[1]

Najmu'd-Din Kubra would often repeat such sayings of famous sufis as: 'The ways of God are as numerous as the number of breaths of his creatures.' He wrote several works in Arabic and Persian. *Al-Usul al-'Ashra*, in Arabic, outlines the ten guiding rules of sufism: repentance, renunciation, trust in God, resignation, seclusion, recollection, concentration on God, patience and contemplation; the final stage, (*riza*), implies the abandonment of self and the seeking of all happiness in anything emanating from the Beloved. The *Sifatu'l-Adab*, written in Persian, contains rules for the sufi neophyte. The *Minhaju's-Salikin* (An Open Road for Travellers on the Sufi Path), in Arabic, is an advanced sufi manual.

Kubra's poems on 'Ali and his descendants are both eloquent and touching, however, they fail to prove the author was a Shi'i. A large number of sufi poets, particularly Iranians, enthusiastically eulogised about

[1] *A literary history of Persia*, II, pp. 492-93.

the greatness of 'Ali and his progeny, at the same time remaining Sunnis. Mole's conclusion that Shaikh Najmu'd-Din tended to create a type of Sunnite-Shi'ism has no real basis.[1] The works of most sufis were imbued with similar sentiments and many Indian mystics whose Sunnism was never doubted, credulously adored the Saiyids and their offspring.

A significant sufi order named the Silsila-i Khwajgan, which thrived mainly in Transoxiana and later in India in its re-organized form, was known as the Naqshbandiyya. It traced its origin from Khwaja Abu Ya'qub Yusuf al-Hamadani (d. Muharram 535/August 1140). The Khwaja obtained his early education at Baghdad and lived at Marw and Herat, dying in Marw. Of his four disciples, Khwaja 'Abdu'l-Khaliq bin 'Abdu'l-Jamil, who came from Ghujduwan, modern Gizduvan, a large village in the north-eastern part of the oasis of Bukhara, was the true originator of the unique features of the Silsila-i Khwajgan.

Shaikh Ghujduwani wrote works both in Persian prose and poetry and compiled several treatises. A collection of his sayings, the *Masaliku'l-'Arifin*, advocated that his disciples should acquire a precise learning of the Qur'an, *Hadis* and *Fiqh*. It urged dervishes to dissociate themselves from both ignorant sufis and those who promiscuously indulged in mixed company. Peace in the heart and a control of the eyesight would help in the pursuit of celibacy. Married life involved the sufi in every-day problems and exposed him to the threat of loss of faith. Mystics should not necessarily avoid *sama'* but any over-indulgence should be abandoned.[2]

The writings of Shaikh Ghujduwani were founded on the *Shari'a* but his eight principles of sufi life and the rituals he advocated were largely based on yogic practices, current in the Bukhara region. The Shaikh's disciples however, were convinced that he had learnt these practices from Khizr. The *Rashhat 'Ainu'l-Hayat* describes them in detail. A summary is contained below:

'1. *Hosh dar dam* (awareness while breathing). Sufis should not inhale or exhale absent-mindedly; every breath should be associated with an awareness of the divine presence.
2. *Nazar bar qadam* (watching the steps). Whenever a sufi walks he should be watchful of his steps, while not permitting his sight to distract him from his goal—awareness of the divine presence.
3. *Safar dar watan* (journey to one's homeland). This involves a journey from human to angelic attributes. Thus the abandonment of human vices leads to the virtues of angels. The essence of this

[1]M. Mole, 'Les Kubrawiya entre sunnisme et shiisme aux huitième et neuvième siècles de l'hegire', *Revue des études Islamiques*, 1961, pp. 61-142. See also his article, 'Traités mineurs de Nagm al-din Kubra,' *Annales Islamologiques*, IV, Cairo, 1963, pp. 1-78.

[2]*Masaliku'l-'Arifin*, India Office Manuscript, Delhi, Persian, 1108, ff. 1b-2b.

demand is the purification and polishing of the heart, achieved through unceasing effort during the early stages of mystical training.

4. *Khalwat dar anjuman* (solitude in an assembly) implies that the outward activities of a sufi in the world do not undermine his inward meditation of God. A sufi may wander into a bazaar but so engrossed in *zikr* should he be that not a single voice is heard by him. Each voice and conversation should be like *zikr*, and his own speech should also echo in his ears in the same way as a recitation of the name of God.
5. *Yad-kard* (remembrance) is related to both oral and mental *zikr*. The easiest way of performing *zikr* is as follows. The sufi controls his breath from below the navel, shuts his lips tightly and fastens his tongue to his palate to prevent suffocation. He then diverts the spiritual heart into a union with the physical heart which is pineal in shape, and *zikr* is begun. It takes the following form. The uttering of *la* (no) involves a process whereby the word is lifted from the navel to the brain; *Ilaha* (God) is expressed, at the same time as the right shoulder is jerked sharply and *il'Allah* (but Allah) is uttered as if the heart of flesh has been soundly struck. This process produces a spiritual heart which ontologically circulates throughout the body. The negation involved in the word (*la*) represents the fact that the world is transitory and the affirmation of *il'Allah* symbolizes the eternal nature of God. A trainee should be perpetually occupied with this form of *zikr* for it to achieve a lasting imprint on his heart of the Unity of God.
6. *Baz-gasht* (restraint). Each time one who performs *zikr* utters *'al-kalimat al-tayyiba*,[1] he should add: "Oh God! Thou art my Goal and I seek Thy satisfaction." This phrase would expel all thoughts, both good and evil, from the heart, thus purifying *zikr*.
7. *Nigah-dasht* (watchfulness). This helps to prevent the intrusion of evil thoughts during contemplation.
8. *Yad-dasht* (recollection) is a state of intuitive perception involving a permanent awareness of the divine presence.[2]

Khwaja Ghujduwani, who devised these practices was succeeded by four *khalifas*, all from Bukhara. But it was 'Arif Riwgari (died 657/1259–60), who was the chief link with Muhammad ibn Muhammad Baha'u'd-Din an-Naqshband, in the following way.

'Arif Riwgari—Mahmud Anjir Faghnawi (d. 643/1245 or 670/1271–72)—'Azizan 'Ali ar-Ramtini (d. 705/1306 or 721/1321–22)—Muhammad Baba as-Samasi (d. 740/1340 or 755/1354)—Saiyid Amir Kulal al-Bukhari (d. 772/1371), Khwaja Baha'u'd-Din Naqshband.

[1]The Islamic confession of faith.
[2]*Rashhat 'Ainu'l-Hayat*, Kanpur, 1911, pp. 20–5.

Khwaja Baha'u'd-Din was born in Muharram 718/March 1318. With Saiyid Kulal, Baha'u'd-Din is said to have obtained training from the spirit of Khwaja 'Abdu'l-Khaliq Ghujduwani. To the latter's eight principles of sufi discipline Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din added three more:

1. *Wuquf-i Zamani* (temporal pause) is the constant self-examination by a sufi on the way his time is spent. This leads to a perception of forgetfulness and an insight into a real understanding of the divine presence.
2. *Wuquf-i 'Adadi* (numerated pause) is the prevention of thought-anarchy through a process of counting the number of times *zikr* in the heart is repeated. The mystic completes one round of *zikr* between three and twenty-one recitations in the one breath; however, if there is no spiritual change after a second round of twenty-one *zikrs* this implies there has been no real impact. 'Negation' expressed in *zikr* should expel all human vices and 'affirmation' should result in a perception of the divine presence.
3. *Wuquf-i Qalbi* (heart pause). This has two meanings: the first is identical to the explanation of *Yad-dasht*, but the second, implies that during *zikr* the heart of flesh should be in no way negligent. To Khwaja Baha'u'd-Din, control of the breath and the counting of *zikr* were not indispensable but he insisted that the *Wuquf-i Qalbi* was imperative. According to Khwaja Baha'u'd-Din, this was the essence of sufi discipline.[1]

Jami believed that Khwaja Baha'u'd-Din emphasized that the Silsila-i Khwajgan or the Naqshbandis should not practise spoken *zikr*, seclusion and *sama'* but concentrate mainly on *Khalwat dar anjuman*, that is, being outwardly busy in worldly acts, but inwardly meditating on God.[2]

Khwaja Baha'u'd-Din died on 3 Rabi' I, 791/1 March 1389. A large group of scholars and mystics spread his order into Transoxiana and India. The name Silsila-i Khwajgan gradually became obsolete and the order became known as the Naqshbandiyya.

The organisation and rituals of Silsilas

Hujwiri saw in sufi saints a vehicle by which 'the Truth and the proof of Muhammad's veracity' could be continued. Drawing upon Tirmizi's thesis of sainthood, he outlined the hierarchy of saints in the following way:

> '(God) has made the Saints the governors of the universe; they have become entirely devoted to His business, and have ceased to follow their sensual affections. Through the blessing of their advent the

[1] *Rashhat 'Ainu'l-Hayat*, Kanpur, 1911, pp. 26-7.
[2] *NU*, p. 386.

rain falls from heaven, and through the purity of their lives the plants spring up from the earth, and through their spiritual influence the Muslims gain victories over the unbelievers. Among them there are four thousand who are concealed and do not know one another and are not aware of the excellence of their state, but in all circumstances are hidden from themselves and from mankind. Traditions have come down to this effect, and the sayings of the Saints—proclaim the truth thereof, and I myself—God be praised!—have had ocular experience (*khabar-i 'iyan*) of this matter. But of those who have power to loose and to bind and are the officers of the Divine court there are three hundred, called *Akhyar*, and forty, called *Abdal*, and seven, called *Abrar*, and four, called *Awtad*, and three, called *Nuqaba*, and one, called *Qutb* or *Ghaws*. All these know one another and cannot act save by mutual consent.'[1]

The silsila system guaranteed the transmission of mystical knowledge acquired by founders of the order to further generations of sufis through their successors or *khalifas*. The 'ulama' accused the sufis of deifying their spiritual teachers (Shaikhs, *pirs* or *murshids*) but the sufis saw their Shaikhs as being illuminated by the light of Muhammad which had existed even before his birth and was the sole cause of creation.

The various silsilas did not develop in an atmosphere of rivalry and hostility towards each other. No attempt was made to develop a central silsila for the entire Islamic world and all sufi Shaikhs believed their own spiritual influence should be confined to a limited territory. This conviction also sprang from the current practice whereby governors of different territories respected the independence of other administrations.

In his own spiritual territory or *wilaya* the *pir* looked after the material, as well as the spiritual needs, of his disciples and also attempted to assist others who asked for his help. The political upheavals and crises of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, precipitated by the Ghuzz and Mongol invasions in Khurasan and Iran, had undermined the authority of the Turkic Sultans and this in turn had led to an increase in the importance of the sufi silsilas. As there was no official avenue through which grievances of the common people could be registered, the only alternative was to seek assistance from members of sufi orders.

As has already been seen, merchants were the leading financial supporters of the sufi movement and in return the khanqahs offered them both hospitality and protection. Gifts from rich men, government officials, princes and rulers were also welcomed, but sufi literature indicates that eminent sufis themselves did not crave offerings. The unsolicited gift (*futuh*) from devotees was their only source of income and a popular belief in the efficacy of sufi prayers for the fulfilment of both

[1]Nicholson, pp. 213–14.

worldly and non-worldly ambitions provided for the continual flow of gifts. Begging was also resorted to in the initial stages in the development of a new khanqah, but affluent khanqahs also insisted that neophyte sufis go to town begging. Firstly this custom was intended to produce humility, and secondly to strengthen the feeling among sufis that they were the lowliest of all God's creatures. Many eminent sufis worked as petty traders, artisans or cultivators, to enable them to remain part of the community, rather than becoming inhabitants of ivory towers. Instances of sufis waging holy wars are not unknown, but the historical records indicate that *jihad* on these occasions was intended to repel enemy invasions, such as those from the heathen Turks or Mongols. Sufis kept themselves aloof from both the administrative machinery and imperialist wars of the government. However, the mystic *tawakkul* (trust in God) did not imply a turning away from society.

Disciple initiation was a complex phenomenon. Some *pirs* carefully examined the talents and potential of those who approached them for initiation; others admitted disciples indiscriminately to their silsilas. Each order followed its own special methods of training and formulas for *zikr* and contemplation. No uniform pattern was evolved. Progress depended on the capacity of the novice; some completed their initiation into sufi life after a short period, others underwent a lengthy period of training. According to Hujwiri, sufi Shaikhs prescribed a probationary period to novices of three years before instructing them in the real secrets of the Path (*Tariqa*). The first year of sufi apprenticeship was devoted to serving the people; the second, to the service of God and the third to guarding the heart. Service was intended to fill the trainee with humility so that others would be considered at the expense of himself. The serving of God necessitated a severance from all self-motivation related to both worlds.[1]

The *Tariqa* was an arduous journey involving numerous risks and impediments. It could be traversed only under the strict supervision of Shaikhs or *pirs* who had themselves traversed all the hills and dales of the Path, and had survived the rapture of the 'states,' perceived the nature of actions, and experienced the severity of 'Divine Majesty' and the clemency of 'Divine Beauty.'

There were many reasons for practising spiritual exercises under the guidance of qualified person. Firstly, the *Tariqa* involved a journey to different spiritual stations; these included repentance (*tawba*), conversion (*inabat*), renunciation (*zuhd*) and trust in God (*tawakkul*). The stages were reached through self mortification, performing *zikr*, and contemplation, and these all needed constant supervision by a Shaikh. Secondly, during a mystic journey certain conditions such as *qabz* (contraction), *bast* (dilation) and illumination, descended into the heart from God

[1] Nicholson, p. 54.

through divine grace. Only a perfect *pir* understood the significance of these states and was able to discriminate between a true illumination and the appearance of one, which in reality was a delusion emanating from the devil. Thirdly, the sufi journey of a novice from the intellectual perception of God to an emotional involvement with Him was a personal experience, a mystery to be shared only with a perfect guide. These experiences could be revealed only to one's *pir*.

There were some exceptions to this rule among sufis who claimed they were disciples of Khazir (or Khizr). A mysterious figure who appeared in Islamic legends, there was some controversy as to whether Khizr was a prophet. Generally it was believed he had drunk the fountain of life, had been rendered immortal and that he was a contemporary of every age. Some commentators on verses 59 to 81 of Chapter 18 of the Qur'an represent Khizr[1] as the guide of Moses who revealed to him the secret, mystical truth that transcended the *Shari'a*, which Moses himself was commissioned to introduce. It was little wonder that sufis believed he was a unique guide in their pursuit of the truth and in their efforts to reach Reality. Belief in Khizr's immortality made him a supernatural being who was involved in the assisting of sufis of well-known orders. In legends Khizr saved men in desperate situations. His name was invoked in times of danger especially by merchants and travellers. The continued association of the sufi movement with the legend of Khizr was so great that almost all eminent sufis are said to have met or encountered this mysterious figure at some time in their careers. Some sufis were said to be his constant companions, others were believed to have had a casual acquaintance with him.

Mujahida, or self-mortification performed under the guidance of a *pir*, strictly adhered to the *Shari'a* and was designed to achieve purification of the soul. The *nafs* or souls of ordinary human beings were unregenerate

[1]Khizr or Khazir, '*The green man*'. The outline of the story is as follows, 'Musa, '*Moses*' goes on a journey with his servant *fata*, the goal of which is the *majma' al-bahrain*. But when they reach this place, they find that as a result of the influence of Satan they have forgotten the fish which they were taking with them. The fish had found its way into the water and had swum away. While looking for the fish the two travellers meet a servant of God. Musa says that he will follow him if he will teach him the right path *rushd*. They come to an arrangement but the servant of God tells Musa at the beginning that he will not understand his doings, that he must not ask for explanations and as a result will not be able to bear with him. They set out on the journey... during which the servant of God does a number of apparently outrageous things which causes Musa to lose patience so that he cannot refrain from asking for an explanation; whereupon the servant of God replies: "Did I not tell you that you would be lacking in patience with me?" He finally leaves Musa and on departing gives him the explanation of his actions, which had their good reasons.' H.A.R. Gibb and J.H. Kramer, *Shorter encyclopaedia of Islam*, p. 232.

According to some traditions Khizr was the companion of Alexander the Great who made a desperate effort to search for the spring of life. Some Arabic sources connect Khizr with the sea and some to the vegetable kingdom. In India Khwaja Khizr is recognized as a river God or a spirit of wells and streams.

(*al-ammara*); obedience to the *Shari'a* and persistent *zikr* enabled sufis to subdue both the unregenerate soul and the blameworthy soul (*lawwama*). This led the soul to the third stage in which it became inspired (*al-mulhama*). Although this stage represented a high level, prayers and *zikr* were imperative in order to produce a further stage of tranquillity (*mutma'inna*). The fifth stage was that of a contented soul in which the soul renounced everything except God. The soul of a sufi entering the sixth stage was called *marziyya*, the approved one, for here the mystics fashioned into one who was both merciful and benevolent to all and this in turn strengthened the bond of love between the Creator and his creatures. The seventh and final stage in the soul's long journey resulted in the creation of a faultless soul (*al-kamila*) and was achieved by only the most perfect of sufis.

Zikr,[1] which can be translated as 'recollection' or 'remembrance,' was essentially a spiritual exercise designed to expel everything which separated the earthly individual from the Divine. Through it sufis were able to experience God's presence in every corner of their being. According to one sufi:

> 'The first stage of *zikr* is to forget self, and the last stage is the effacement of the worshipper in the act of worship, without consciousness of worship, and such absorption in the object of worship as precludes return to the subject thereof.'[2]

Zikr was performed both communally and in seclusion. The former enabled senior disciples to supervise the progress of their juniors. The *zikr-i khafi*, recollection performed either mentally or in a low voice, was recommended by the Naqshbandis; the Qadiriyya and the Chishtiyya generally performed *zikr-i jali*, which was recited aloud. Both forms of *zikr* involved control of the breath and over inhalation and exhalation. The formulas for *zikr* differed from one order to another, but generally they involved the recitation of different syllables of the *kalima* or some of the many names of God.

Zikr popularized the use of the *tasbih* or rosary, consisting of 99 or 100 beads. Some orders used rosaries of 301 beads, but ones of 1000 beads were not unknown.[3]

[1]*Zikr* is founded on the following verses in the Qur'an: "He (God) is first. He is last. The Manifest, and the Hidden, and Who knoweth all things." "He (God) is with you wheresoever ye be." "We (God) are closer to him (man) than his neck-vein." "Whichever way ye turn, there is the face of God." "God encompasseth all things." "All on earth shall pass away, but the face of thy God shall abide resplendent with majesty and glory." T.P. Hughes, *A dictionary of Islam*, London, 1935, pp. 703–04.

[2]R.A. Nicholson, *The mystics of Islam*, London, 1963, p. 48.

[3]"The introduction of the rosary into Christendom is ascribed by Pope Pius V, in a Bull, AD 1596, to Dominic, the founder of the Black Friars, AD 1221, and it is related that Paul of Pherma, an Egyptian ascetic of the fourth century, being ordered to recite 300 prayers,

Zikr was followed by meditation to allow the individual thoughts of sufis to emerge. Generally dervishes meditated on some particular verse of the Qur'an, and at the same time an image of the *pir* was recalled to mind.

Through *baiy'a* or formal initiation, disciples were inextricably spiritually linked to their *pirs*. In order to solemnize the occasion, the *pir* would place his hand on the disciple's head, or alternately, the ritual involved the grasping of each other's hands. A distinguished disciple, or one particularly favoured by the Shaikh, was invested by him with a *khirqa*. This was not necessarily made of wool but invariably was patched. At the ceremony the Shaikh imparted to his disciple secret instructions commensurate with the latter's abilities and transmitted to him special blessings. According to Hujwiri, the wearing of the *muraqqa* or *khirqa* was practised by Muhammad and his companions. Another tradition says that after the Prophet's return from his *mi'raj* or ascension, Muhammad invested 'Ali with a cloak which he had been instructed by God to give to one who answered a particular question. Investiture of the *khirqa* increased the religious responsibilities of the disciple and he was expected to prove himself worthy of the honour. Hujwiri gives the following allegorical interpretation of the cloak's significance:

> 'Its collar is annihilation of intercourse (with men), its two sleeves are observance (*hifz*) and continence (*'ismat*), its two gussets are poverty and purity, its belt is persistence in contemplation, its hem (*kursi*) is tranquillity in (God's) presence, and its fringe is settlement in the abode of union.'[1]

Some distinguished disciples who had been endowed with *khirqas* were also sent by their Shaikhs to act as deputies or *khalifas* at different places during their lifetimes. They were given a licence or diploma called an *ijaza* or *khilafat-nama*, authorizing recipients to disseminate the principles and practices of their respective orders. Each *khilafat-nama* was formally signed and sealed by the Shaikh and witnessed by one or two of his important disciples.

Before a Shaikh's death, he would nominate his spiritual heir and bequeath to him his prayer carpet or skin called a *sajjada*, his *subha*, his staff and personal *khirqa*. The heir's title was *Sajjada-Nashin*, in Arabic, *Shaikh as-Sajjada*. Succession was not necessarily hereditary or a decision of the Shaikh, in some orders after a Shaikh's death a *khalifa* would be elected.

collected as many pebbles which he kept in his bosom, and threw out one by one at every prayer, which shows that the rosary was probably not in use at that period.... It seems probable that the Muslims borrowed the rosary from the Buddhists, and that the Crusaders copied their Muslim opponents and introduced it into Christendom."' *A Dictionary of Islam*, p. 546.

[1]Nicholson, p. 56.

Generally, Shaikhs were buried inside their khanqahs or close-by. Eventually rulers or important nobles, devoted to a particular Shaikh, erected imposing tombs on the graves of their patron saints. Even the humblest of these burial sites became institutions of far-reaching significance. By the eleventh century, khanqahs had become centres for the spiritual élite. However, the tombs were also for the people, both Muslim and non-Muslim, many of whom travelled vast distances to reach them. Pilgrims sought the intercession of the Shaikh's spirit for the fulfilment of their own ambitions, both religious and mundane. Naturally, the most enthusiastic disseminators of miraculous powers attached to the tombs were those whose wishes were attained, but the empty-handed cursed their own lot, rather than questioning the genuine sanctity of the saints. Such activity at the tombs led to an identification between the common man and the silsila, and this was often associated with a genuine feeling of respect for the Shaikh.

Gradually the veneration of tombs degenerated into an excess of superstitious practices. The belief spread that the spirit of the saints resided in their graves and could be invoked for private use. Fictitious graves were also constructed and worshipped; a curious story is related by J.P. Brown in which an ass's grave was believed to radiate blessings to a group of villages in Anatolia.[1]

Great celebrations were held to commemorate the chief landmarks in the life of a Shaikh. Then, as now, the most popular date marked the anniversary of the death of great Indian sufis. This was known as the *'urs* or wedding, for the death of a mystic denoted the return of his soul to the supernatural source from which it had been separated during its earthly existence. This belief was strengthened by the philosophy of Ibn al-'Arabi in his most significant concept, the *Wahdat al-Wujud* or the *Tawhid-i Wujudi*, that is, the Unity of Being.

Wahdat al-Wujud

The twelfth century was a watershed in the history of sufism. This was brought about by the introduction and widespread acceptance of the theory of *Wahdat al-Wujud*. Ibn al-'Arabi did not, in fact, devise the concept himself but he managed to reconcile varying sufi views on Reality and re-orientated them in such a way as to form a sound basis for future developments in ideas on mysticism. Ibn al-'Arabi was immortalized by the title, Shaikh al-Akbar, 'the Greatest Shaikh.'

Born at Murcia in the south-east of Spain on 27 Ramazan 560/7 August 1165 into the ancient Arab tribe of Tayy, Ibn al-'Arabi was a precocious child. At an early age he had a vision which changed the course of his life. Adopting sufism, Ibn al-'Arabi served under many different Shaikhs, at the same time continuing to claim that his gnosis

[1]J.P. Brown, *The Dervishes*, ed. H.A. Rose, London, 1968, pp. 307-22.

was based on direct inspiration. His father was a friend of the celebrated philosopher, Ibn Rushd or Averroes (1126–98). As a youth, Ibn al-'Arabi impressed Averroes by the perception of his own divine inspiration.

In 590/1194 Ibn al-'Arabi went to Tunis and the following year to Fez. In 597/1200 he visited the Almohad capital of Marrakesh, then he went to Mecca. In 601/1204 he left for Baghdad where he remained for six years before visiting Quniya. In 611/1214 he re-visited Mecca where he compiled a commentary on a collection of his Arabic poems, *Tarjuman al-Ashwaq* (Interpretation of Love). These had been written during his first pilgrimage and his commentary explained their esoteric meaning. The following year, Ibn al-'Arabi left Mecca and spent the next nine years at such places as Siwas, and Malalya in Anatolia. Finally in 629/1232, he settled at Damascus, living there until his death on 28 Rabi' II 638/16 November 1240.

Ibn al-'Arabi was a truly prolific author. Although he wrote excellent mystical poetry in Arabic, his great works, *al-Futuhat al-Makkiyya* (Meccan Victories or Discourses) and the *Fusus al-Hikam* (Bezels of Wisdom) are philosophical. Ibn al-'Arabi claimed that *Fusus* had been revealed to him in a single dream. Both works in fact are a summary of the Islamic esoteric heritage.

Not only was Ibn al-'Arabi a great sufi in his own right, he was also a link between eastern and western sufism. His writings are extremely difficult to understand. The symbols and metaphors he used in an effort to explain his own system of sufism shocked the orthodox. Thanks to the efforts of his commentators, writing both in Arabic and Persian, the impact of the works of Ibn al-'Arabi and his own influence as a sufi, penetrated deeply both into current and later sufi thought.

Among his disciples, Sadru'd-Din Al-Qunawi, who was initiated at Quniya in 607/1210, helped to popularize Ibn al-'Arabi's works in Anatolia through the method of lecturing. Jalalu'd-Din Rumi was also greatly impressed by his ideas. 'Iraqi, who will be discussed in Chapter Three, introduced Ibn al-'Arabi to Indian sufis. Of the many Persian commentators on Ibn al-'Arabi, none could excel Maulana Nuru'd-Din 'Abdu'r-Rahman Jami of Herat (817/1414–898/1492). A descendant of 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani, 'Abdu'l-Karim al-Jili (767/1365–832/1428), who lived for some time in Yaman, later travelling through India in 790/1388, wrote about thirty books on Ibn al-'Arabi's philosophy, including a commentary on the *Futuhat*. His most important work was *al-Insan al-Kamil* (The Perfect Man) which sought to develop, and occasionally to modify, the doctrines of Ibn al-'Arabi.

The concept of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* (Unity of Being) expounded by Ibn al-'Arabi was founded on a primordial belief in the ultimate nature of Unity which reduced to nothing, ideas of the existence of entities 'other than God.' According to Ibn al-'Arabi, the Absolute Being was in-

separable from the Absolute Existent and was the ultimate source of all existence. The belief that this concept was a form of pantheism has now been discarded. Louis Massignon translated it as 'existential monism'; Affifi also does not approve of the term pantheism, but does not reject it completely, calling it instead 'Islamic pantheism.' T. Burckhardt, another authority on Ibn al-'Arabi, unequivocally refutes the use of the word in connection with *Wahdat al-Wijud* and says:

'Pantheism only conceives of the relationship between the Divine Principle and things from the one point of view of substantial or existential continuity, and this is an error explicitly rejected by every traditional doctrine. If there were such a continuity by virtue of which God and the manifested universe could be compared as a branch can be compared with the trunk from which it sprang, then this continuity, or, (what amounts to the same thing), the substance common to the two terms, would either be determined by some superior principle which differentiated it or would itself be superior to the two terms which it bound together and, in a sense, included: God would then not be God. Now it might be said that God is himself this continuity, or this Unity, but in that case it would not be conceived of as outside Him, so that He is in reality beyond compare and therefore distinct from everything manifested, but without the possibility of anything being 'outside' or 'beside' Him. Now, as Muhi'u'd-Din ibn 'Arabi says in his "Epistle on Unity," the *Risalat al-Ahadiyah*: "...None grasps Him save He Himself. None knows Him but He Himself...He knows Himself by Himself...Other-than-He cannot grasp Him. His impenetrable veil is His own Oneness. Other-than-He does not cloak Him. His veil is His very existence. He is veiled by His oneness in a manner that cannot be explained. Other-than-He does not see Him; whether prophet, envoy or perfected saint or angel near unto Him."'[1]

Henry Corbin takes even stronger exception to a monistic interpretation being applied to Ibn al-'Arabi's philosophy and brand of mysticism. He says:

'It is perhaps because our age-old Christological habits prevent us from conceiving (of) a union other than hypostatic that so many Western writers have characterized Ibn 'Arabi as a 'monist.' They overlook the fact that such fundamentally docetic thinking is hardly compatible with what Western philosophy has defined as 'monism.'[2]

[1]T. Burckhardt, *An introduction to Sufi doctrine*, tr. by D.M. Matheson, Lahore, 1963, pp. 23-4.
[2]H. Corbin, *Creative imagination in the Sufism of Ibn 'Arabi*, tr. R. Manhem, London, 1969, p. 209.

The Islamic doctrine of *Tawhid* or the affirmation of God's Oneness or Unity is founded on a belief that there is no other God than Allah, who is also the Unique one, the Creator and the Lord of Judgement. The orthodox differed sharply from their opponents over relations between the divine essence and its attributes, but to the *falasifa*, or Muslim philosophers, God is a Being: 'necessary and perfect, supreme intelligence and supreme love, producing the world by a mode of necessary and deliberate emanation.' Sufis of Hallaj's school advocated that: 'in His essence, love, *'ishq*, is the Essence of the essence.' They did not advocate a philosophical basis for God. Ghazali's attempt, however, to reconcile current theories, prepared the ground for Ibn al-'Arabi's theory of the Unity of Being. His God was not the transcendental God of the orthodox but the Absolute Being who manifested Himself in every form of existence, and in the highest degree in the form of the Perfect Man. According to Ibn al-'Arabi, the One and the many are two aspects of 'One'; Affifi interprets his concept this way:

> 'The One reveals Himself in the many...as an object is revealed in different mirrors, each mirror reflecting an image determined by its nature and its capacity as a recipient. Or it is like a source of light from which an infinite number of lights are derived. Or like a substance which penetrates and permeates the forms of existing objects: thus, giving them their meaning and being. Or it is like a mighty sea on the surface of which we observe countless waves for ever appearing and disappearing. The eternal drama of existence is nothing but this ever-renewed creation (*al-khalq al-jadid*) which is in reality a perpetual process of self-revelation.'[1]

Ibn al-'Arabi identified the Absolute with *zat* or essence and interpreted it as Absolute Being (*wujud al-mutlaq*), calling it the source and cause of all existence. The symbol of mirrors was used to remind the person who was the recipient of divine self-manifestation that he was not seeing God directly but rather a reflection of the divine light. Like all eminent sufis, Ibn al-'Arabi emphasized: 'He who knows himself knows the Lord.' The Absolute in His hidden aspect was a mystery and a darkness whose secrets could, under no circumstances, be unveiled. It was only the self-revealing aspect of the Absolute which human beings could understand.

A new orientation to the theological terms *tanzih* and *tashbih* were given by Ibn al-'Arabi. To the 'ulama,' *tanzih* meant divine transcendence and *tashbih*, anthropomorphism. But to Ibn al-'Arabi *tanzih* referred to the aspect of completeness in the Absolute and *tashbih* stood for His limitedness (*taqayyud*). To him there was no antagonism between the two and a true knowledge of the Absolute was necessitated by their

[1]M.M. Sharif ed., *A history of Muslim philosophy*, I, p. 413.

fusion. As long as an idolater was aware he was worshipping God, idolatry could be tolerated for this tended to make *tanzih* and *tashbih* complimentary. If an idol worshipper imagined that a piece of stone or wood was God, he ignored *tanzih*. An awareness of the fact that the Form of the Absolute ran through the entire world of Being amounted to a harmonious connection between *tanzih* and *tashbih*.[1]

Ibn al-'Arabi used the term, emanation, in a sense which differed from Plotinus, who believed it to be: 'one thing over-flowing from the Absolute One, then another from the first thing, etc. in the form of a chain.' But to Ibn al-'Arabi emanation meant that: 'one and the same Reality variously determines and delimits itself and appears immediately in the forms of different things.'[2] His theory of self-manifestation of the Absolute, however, did not contradict the Islamic theory of creation. It was founded on sufi cosmogony which described the motive for creation this way: 'I was a hidden Treasure, I yearned to be known. That is why I produced creatures, in order to be known in them'. The Divine Being is a Creator because He wished to know Himself in beings who know Him. Thus 'the Creation is essentially the revelation of the Divine Being, first to Himself, a luminescence occurring within Him; it is a theophany (*tajalli-ilahi*).' To Ibn al-'Arabi, creation *ex nihilo* or an absolute beginning from nothing was an idea without meaning.[3] To him the world continued being created anew every moment, and all movements sought to reach the Absolute One. *Fana'* symbolized the passing away of all forms and *baqa'* was a perpetuation in the Divine Being.

Ibn al-'Arabi drew upon both semantics and *Hadis* to support his idea that the entire creative process was dominated by feminine elements. Reality was both mother and father; in it were enshrined activity as well as passivity. The perception of beauty as the 'theophany' par excellence was natural[4]: 'God is a beautiful being who loves beauty.'

Ibn al-'Arabi attached a high importance to the cosmic significance of man. He believed that the universe was a 'Big Man' created by God in order to see himself, while Man was a small universe, a well-polished mirror reflecting objects as they really were. In man were found all the attributes which the universe embodied, while a Perfect Man was the epitome of all understanding and the vicegerency of God on earth.[5] According to Ibn al-'Arabi, the Perfect Man was the 'First Epiphany of God,' sometimes he was identified with the Logos and sometimes with the spirit-giving principle imminent in the universe. His arguments were based on the Jewish tradition that God created Adam in his own image

[1] *Fusus al-Hikam*, A. Affifi, Cairo, 1946, pp. 68-72.

[2] T. Izutsu, *A comparative study of the key philosophical concepts in Sufism and Taoism*, I, Tokyo, 1966, p. 145.

[3] H. Corbin, *Creative imagination in the Sufism of Ibn 'Arabi*, pp. 186-95.

[4] *Fusus al-Hikam*, p. 82.

[5] ibid, pp. 48-9.

but also made full use of the sufi theories of *Haqiqa al-Muhammadiyya* and *Nur al-Muhammadiyya*. Thus in relation to the Absolute, Muhammad was both a 'servant' and 'passive,' but in relation to the world he was 'lord' and 'active.' The Perfect Man having 'actualized in himself the Absolute' was permeated by the Absolute. What distinguished the Absolute from created beings were certain attributes contained in the former, such as the necessity for existence (*wujub al-wujud*) and eternity.[1]

Ibn al-'Arabi discredited reason and blamed it for covering man with an opaque veil of 'ego.' This drove man further from the Absolute making him inferior to animals, plants and minerals, which did not have any ego. It was by dispelling reason that man ascended from his lowly position and the light of the Absolute illuminated him. Using the example of a coloured glass, Ibn al-'Arabi said that as the same light passed through different coloured glasses many shades of light appeared, so also the Absolute was manifested diversely in men of varying capacities. The saints (*Wali*) who had died to their own ego were Perfect Men, for *Wali* was a name of God and indicated that saints were an aspect of the Absolute. After Muhammad, prophethood, or the process of law-giving, ceased, but the state of *Wali* never ceased to exist. The concept of the *Khatam al-Walaya* (the seal of sainthood) in Ibn al-'Arabi's world-view meant the end of a cycle of saints; he believed that a cycle embodying the heritage of Muhammad and the Messiah ended with himself. Saints coming in subsequent centuries were to inherit the legacy of Ibn al-'Arabi's ideas regarding sainthood.

Mystical union, to Ibn al-'Arabi, did not amount to 'becoming' one with God, rather it was the realization of an already existing union. Like all sufis, he believed that *'ilm* (knowledge) belonged to the intellect and *ma'rifa* (intuitive knowledge) to the soul. He advised sufis to remove the veils woven through sin which separated the soul and God, thus enabling the former to radiate esoteric knowledge, the ray of divine light. Great tolerance, human compassion and fellowship were indispensable features of a spiritual life; these were also the chief means by which mystics could comprehend oneness with the Reality which was the One and All.

The religious and moral implications of Ibn al-'Arabi's teachings had a great impact on theologians in the Islamic world, from the twelfth century onwards. Although he believed in the supremacy of Islam as a world religion, Ibn al-'Arabi advocated that the Divine existed and was worshipped in all religions, and that God was worshipped in Love, His highest manifestation. He declared:

> 'My heart has become the receptacle of every 'form';
> It is a pasture for gazelles (i.e. objects of love) and

[1] *Fusus al-Hikam*, pp. 53-4.

a convent for Christian monks.
And a temple for idols, and the pilgrim's Ka'ba,
and the tablets of the Torah (Jewish Law)
and the Book of the Qur'an.
I follow the religion of love; whichever way its camels take,
for this is my religion and my faith.'[1]

Sufism in India

The Arab sea traders operating between the Malabar coast and Ceylon first introduced Islam to that region of the sub-continent. The belief that the conquest of Sind at the time of the Umayyad Caliph al-Walid I (705–15) originated as a punitive expedition against the ruling Raja Dahir, after his pirates had seized some Muslims on a *hajj* to Mecca, is a myth. In reality, the conquest of Transoxiana and Sind was initiated by Hajjaj, Walid's governor in Iraq, and was one aspect of his expansionist policy. In 710 Muhammad bin Qasim al-Saqafi began his advance through Makran and Baluchistan with the conquest of Sind between 711 and 712; the following year he extended his influence as far as Multan in the southern Panjab. Similarly, Qutayba bin Muslim, another enterprising general, conquered Transoxiana between 705 and 715. Balkh, Bukhara, Samarqand, Khwarazm and Farghana became Arab colonies.

The great spread of sufism in Transoxiana and Khurasan has been dealt with previously, however, no such developments in Sind are recorded. Early Arab conquerors settled their families in large numbers in the various towns of Sind. Conversion of the local population occurred due to several reasons. Many Brahmans holding high government offices embraced Islam in order to retain their positions. A large number of Buddhists who had acted as fifth columnists against their Hindu rulers and were extremely hostile to Brahman domination, converted to the faith of their conquerors. Muhammad bin Qasim is believed to have induced several chieftains to accept Islam[2] and for reasons of expediency some responded favourably. The Raja of Asifan, in the Panjab, is said to have converted to Islam after persuasion from some Muslim merchants,[3] who as a class had always been enthusiastic proselytizers of Islam. The Qur'an was also said to have been translated into local regional dialects. Hindu and Buddhist scholars from Sind were sent to the 'Abbasid court. In the eighth century Abu Ma'shar[4] Najih (d. 170/787) a scholar of *Hadis*, and the poet Abu'l-'Ata[5] (died after 158/774) were leading literary figures from Sind.

[1] *Tarjuman al-Ashwaq*, quoted by Affifi, *A history of Muslim philosophy*, I, p. 144.

[2] Muhammad 'Ali bin Hamid bin Abu Bakr Kufi, *Chach Nama*, Delhi, 1939, pp. 104–06, 116, 119–21, 156, 288–90.

[3] Abu'l-'Abbas Ahmad al-Baladhuri, *Futuh al-Buldan*, Leiden, 1866, p. 446.

[4] *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (new edition), I, p. 140.

[5] ibid, p. 140.

Lack of information about sufis in Sind may be ascribed to two factors. Firstly, land communications between Khurasan, Transoxiana and Sind were slow and arduous. Secondly, the blossoming of sufism during the tenth century had synchronized with the rise of the Isma'ili Fatimid Caliphate from 909 to 1171. Between 977 and 985, Multan had become a dependency of the Fatimids of Egypt. Mansura, the capital of Sind, ruled by the Sumira dynasty had also accepted the over-lordship of the Egyptian Caliphs. Therefore sufism, which subscribed to Sunni Islam, was naturally cut, from close relations with other areas of Central Asia, also within the Sunni fold.

The Isma'ilis were a sect of Shi'is who believed that the descendants of Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq's son, Isma'il, who died in 765, five years before his father's death were the true Imams. They interpreted the Qur'an symbolically and allegorically, emphasizing that the inner meaning (*batin*) of the Qur'an should be given preference to its literal meaning. They called their interpretation *ta'wil* (esoteric exegesis) and believed that it had been revealed only to the *khass* (élite). This gave rise to a hierarchical order of teachers ranging from the Imam to the simple believer. The *batin* was not to be revealed to the uninitiated. In order to avert the danger of persecution from orthodox Sunnis they used what the Shi'is called *taqiya* (religious concealment) in order to escape persecution. They were enthusiastic missionaries who unhesitatingly modified their esoteric system to suit their converts. According to fourteenth and fifteenth century legends, Isma'ili propagandists evolved a belief for Hindu converts that 'Ali was the tenth incarnation of Vishnu, that Adam was another aspect of Siva and that Muhammad was in fact Brahma.[1] This is, however, not necessarily representative of early Isma'ili approaches to proselytization.

Between 1004 and 1011 the invasions of Mahmud of Ghazna dealt a strong blow to Isma'ili power in Multan, however their impact was transitory. In 1025, laden with booty obtained from the plunder of Somnath, Mahmud's armies passed through Mansura *en route* to Ghazna but, harassed by local Jats, had no time to launch a further attack on the Isma'ilis. The Isma'ilis continued to flourish in Mansura and Multan. A hundred and fifty years later in 1175 Mu'izzu'd-Din Muhammad bin Sam seized Multan, establishing firm control and Sunni rule over the southern part of the Panjab.

The Sumira dynasty continued to rule the Lower Sind until the middle of the fourteenth century. After the end of the twelfth century, the Upper Sind came under the domination of Sunni rule. It would seem, however, that by the middle of the eleventh century, sufism had penetrated into the areas surrounding Multan.

The first sufi to settle in the region was Shaikh Safiu'd-Din Kaziruni.

[1] T.W. Arnold, *The preaching of Islam*, Lahore, 1961, p. 215.

The Shaikh was a native of Kazirun near Shiraz, in Iran. His uncle was Shaikh Abu Ishaq Kaziruni,[1] who died in 426/1035. After appointing Safiu'd-Din his *khalifa*, according to tradition, Shaikh Abu Ishaq ordered him to mount a camel and travel in whatever direction the animal led him; he was then to remain where the camel finally halted. Although this happened to be in the middle of a desert, the Shaikh founded a town later called Uch.[2] Although this story would appear mythical, it is typical of medieval tales relating to sufis.

In reality, it was the news of Sultan Mahmud's conquest of Multan which prompted sufis to advise their talented and adventurous disciples to settle in that region. A new, reasonably unpopulated area offered tranquillity to a contemplative.

No account of Shaikh Safiu'd-Din's activities at Uch remains. An anecdote, related to his disciples by Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya', gives an interesting account of the Shaikh's encounter with a yogi. According to the story, a yogi visited Shaikh Safiu'd-Din at Uch and challenged him to a competitive performance of miracles. The tale continues that the yogi began an exhibition of supernatural powers by flying to the ceiling and returning safely to the ground. When it was his turn, Shaikh Safiu'd-Din prayed to God, begging Him for some miraculous power. Then, leaving the room, he flew to the west, the north and the south, returning to the room and the awestruck yogi. Although he himself could bodily rise in a perpendicular position as a result of powers achieved through his own spiritual exercises, the yogi admitted

[1]Abu Ishaq Kaziruni was recognized as the protector of travellers and both merchants and rulers gave huge gifts to his *khanqah*. Ibn Battuta gives the following graphic description of his influence.

"This Shaikh Abu Ishaq is highly venerated by the people of India and China. Travellers on the Sea of China make a practice when the wind turns against them and they fear pirates, of making vows to Abu Ishaq, and each one of them sets down in writing the obligation he has undertaken in his vow. Then when they come safely to land, the servitors of the hospice go on board the ship, take the inventory, and exact (the amount of) his vow from each person who has pledged himself. There is not a ship that comes from China or from India but has thousands of *dinars* in it (vowed to the saint), and the agents on behalf of the intendant of the hospice come to take delivery of that sum. There are some poor brethren who come to beg alms of the Shaikh; each of these receives a written order for some amount, sealed with the die into red wax and apply it to the order so that the mark of the stamp remains upon it, to this effect: 'Whoso has in his possession (moneys dedicated under) a vow to Shaikh Abu Ishaq, let him give thereof to so-and-so so much,' the order being for a thousand or a hundred *dirhams*, or some intermediate or smaller sum, according to the standing of the poor brother concerned. Then, when the mendicant finds someone who has in his possession anything under vow, he takes from him and writes for him a receipt for the amount on the back of the order. The king of India (probably Muhammad bin Tughluq) once vowed ten thousand *dinars* to the Shaikh Abu Ishaq, and when the news of this reached the poor brethren of the hospice, one of them came to India, took delivery of the money, and went back with it to the hospice."

H.A.R. Gibb, tr., *The travels of Ibn Battuta*, II, Cambridge, 1962, pp. 320-21.

[2]Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi, *Akhbaru'l-Akhyar*, Delhi, 1332/1914, p. 205.

that the Shaikh's performance emanated from divine grace and was therefore miraculous.[1]

The term 'jogi' or 'yogi' in sufi literature, is never precisely defined, however the yogis referred to in later anecdotes are the Nath Yogis or Siddhas who acquired supernatural powers through hatha-yoga. Possibly the yogi mentioned in this story was a Nath yogi.

As mentioned earlier, the annexation of the Panjab by Mahmud of Ghazna and its incorporation into his empire prompted many sufis to settle in the area. Abu'l-Fazl Muhammad bin al-Hasan Khattali, a disciple of Husri (d. 371/981–82) of the school of Junaid, ordered his disciple, Shaikh Husain Zinjani to move to the Panjab. Later Khattali asked a young disciple, Abu'l-Hasan 'Ali bin 'Usman bin 'Ali al-Ghaznawi al-Jullabi al-Hujwiri, to follow Husain Zinjani. Hujwiri objected on the grounds that already an eminent sufi was there. His *pir*, however, ordered him to obey. Hujwiri reached Lahore after dark. In the morning Shaikh Husain Zinjani's coffin was carried out for burial—he had died during the night.[2] Zinjani was buried in Chah Miran, which is now a suburb of Lahore. It would seem that Hujwiri probably reached Lahore in *c.* 1035, while Sultan Mas'ud I (1031–41) reigned in Ghazna.

As his name implies, Hujwiri was born in the Ghazna suburb, about 1009. He studied under several sufi masters, some of whom he names in his *Kashf al-Mahjub* were Abu'l-Qasim Gurgani, Khwaja Muzaffar, Abu'l-'Abbas Ahmad bin Muhammad al-Ashqani. However, Khattali of Syria was his main teacher. Even after settling in Lahore, Hujwiri kept in contact with sufis in Transoxiana, Khurasan and Syria. He made long trips at least twice during his lifetime, each for more than two years. When Khattali died in 1065, Hujwiri was by his side. After 1067, Hujwiri returned to Lahore, remaining there until his death. According to the tablet on his tomb, the saint died in 465/1072–73. Nicholson believed that Hujwiri died sometime between 465 and 469/1076–77.[3] However, the *Kashf al-Mahjub* recorded Khwaja 'Abdu'llah Ansari, who died in 1089, as amongst the contemporary saints. It would seem, therefore, that Hujwiri died some time after that date.

Later Muslims posthumously conferred on Shaikh Hujwiri the title, Data Ganj Bakhsh, 'Distributor of (Unlimited) Treasure'. His tomb has always been greatly venerated by sufis and Muslims alike. Among early mystics who undertook hard ascetic exercises in Lahore at the Shaikh's tomb was Khwaja Mui'nu'd-Din Chishti, the founder of the leading Indian order, the Chishtiyya.

Hujwiri was a writer of both poetry and prose. Of his works the follow-

[1]Amir Hasan Sijzi, *Fawa'idu'l-Fu'ad*, Bulandshahr, 1272/1855–56, pp. 57–8.

[2]ibid, p. 39.

[3]Nicholson, pp. 166–67, 169–70; Hujwiri's Travels: Azarbayjan, pp. 57 and 410; Bastam, p. 68; Damascus, Ramla and Baital-Jin in Syria, pp. 94, 167, 343; Tus and Uzkand, p. 234; Mayhana, p. 235; Marw, p. 401; Samarqand, p. 407; Nicholson's preface, pp. IX–XII.

ing are mentioned in his masterpiece, the *Kashf al-Mahjub* (The Uncovering of Veils):

'1. *Minhaj al-Din*, a work on sufi practices, containing a detailed account of the Ahl-i Suffa and a full biography of Husain bin Mansur al-Hallaj.
2. *Asrar al-khiraq wa'l-ma'unat*, a work on the patched garments worn by sufis.
3. The *Kitab-i fana' wa baqa'* written, the author relates, 'in the vanity and rashness of youth.'
4. A work of which no title is given, in which the sayings of al-Hallaj are explained.
5. The *Kitab al-Bayan li-Ahl al-'Iyan*, a work on the union with God.
6. The *Bahr al-Qulub*.
7. *Al-Ri'ayat li-Huquq Allah* on Divine Unity.
8. A work on faith of which the title is not specified.'[1]

Hujwiri's *Kashf al-Mahjub* is also the first known manual of sufism written in Persian. Composed towards the end of his life, the work draws upon the vast source material available in Arabic and is a most authoritative exposition of sufism according to Junaid's school. As noted by Nicholson, the most remarkable chapter in the *Kashf al-Mahjub* relates to the many doctrines held by different sects of sufis. Hujwiri however, is not merely a compiler. Firstly, he explains the doctrines of various schools, then he relates and assesses them. His comments form the most authoritative classification of sufi thoughts and practices.

The *Kashf al-Mahjub* suggests that in the eleventh century a number of mystics and scholars who had settled in Lahore were strongly hostile to the views of its author. A scholar, who Hujwiri fails to name, an expert in Qur'anic commentaries, sharply disagreed with his interpretation of *fana'* and *baqa*.' According to the scholar, *baqa*' indicated God's subsistence in man. Some Lahore sufis believed that gnosis emanated from inspiration; Hujwiri disparagingly called this view 'Brahmanical.' Moreover he accused some Muslims of accepting what he saw as the higher status of prophets. To Hujwiri's dissatisfaction they advocated that the saints were superior to prophets.[2] These developments so distressed Hujwiri that he considered himself a 'captive among uncongenial folk' in Lahore.'[3]

It would appear that from its very inception, sufism in India developed conflicting trends mainly due to challenges from movements amongst local mystics. Sufi history in India is the story both of various challenges and responses, and also of the cross-fertilization of new ideas.

[1]Nicholson's preface, pp. XI–XII.

[2]Nicholson, pp. 236-43, 271.

[3]Nicholson, p. 91. The original does not indicate that he was actually imprisoned, *see* Nicholson's preface p. X.

Chapter Two

The Chishtis

THE Chishti order of sufis is essentially an Indian one. Other branches emanating from the town of Chisht in modern Afghanistan did not survive for long in the Perso-Islamic world. Chisht, written as Khisht in the Persian geographical work, the *Hudud al-'Alam*, which was compiled in 372/982, is now a small village known as Khwaja Chisht on the river Hari Rud, some hundred kilometres east of Herat.[1] It was in this region that the Ghurid Sultans of the Shansab dynasty established their rule in the twelfth century. Until the tenth century the region was constantly invaded by the governors of Khurasan[2] and this resulted in the Islamization of the multi-religious population, many of whom had taken refuge there after the Arab conquest of Iran. Previously, the Buddhists had been displaced by Jews, the Jews by Manichaeans, and they in turn by Muslims. After the gradual Islamization of the area, its principal towns, such as Herat, Chisht and Jam, became great centres for sufis from other parts of the Islamic world. By the end of the ninth century these towns were competing with each other for supremacy as the chief sufi centre which supported the greatest number of that movement's followers. Nevertheless, they all remained of equal importance.

Among the sufi migrants to Chisht was Shaikh Abu Ishaq Shami from Syria. The Shaikh traced his spiritual origin from 'Ali and the Prophet Muhammad, and then through Hasan Basri, in the following spiritual genealogy:

Hasan Basri—'Abdu'l-Wahid bin Zaid—
Fuzail bin Iyaz—Ibrahim Adham Balkhi—
Khwaja Sadidu'd-Din Huzayfa al-Mar'ashi—
Abu Hubayra Basri—Khwaja Mamshad 'Alwi Dinawari—
Abu Ishaq Shami.[3]

Abu Ishaq returned to Syria and died in 329/940, at Akka, the Acco of

[1]V. Minorsky, tr., *Hudud al-'Alam*, London, 1937, p. 343.

[2]G. Le Strange, tr., *Nuzhat al-Qulub* of Hamdu'llah Mustawfi, London, 1919, p. 152.

[3]K.A. Nizami, ed., *Khairu'l-Majalis*, Aligarh, 1959, p. 8. A.S. Usha, ed., *Futuhu's-Salatin* by 'Isami, Madras, 1948, pp. 7-8. Many scholars dispute the authenticity of this genealogical tree.

the Old Testament, leaving Khwaja Abu Ahmad Abdal Chishti as his successor.[1] Possibly Shaikh Abu Ishaq reached Chisht sometime before 260/873–74 as he is said to have prophesied the birth of Khwaja Abu Ahmad Abdal which occurred during the same year.

Although Khwaja Abu Ahmad's father was an eminent citizen in Chisht, he failed to dissuade his son from following the sufi path. Abu Ahmad[2] died in 355/965–66, having appointed his son Abu Muhammad successor, and the latter in turn nominated his sister's son, Khwaja Yusuf, to succeed him.[3] Khwaja 'Abdu'llah Ansari of Herat was extremely friendly with Khwaja Yusuf.[4] After the latter's death in 459/1066–67, his son, Khwaja Maudud Chishti, succeeded him. Khwaja Maudud travelled through Balkh and Bukhara, being trained for four years[5] in various forms of mysticism.

Khwaja Maudud died in 577/1181–82 after having appointed his son, Khwaja Ahmad,[6] successor. However, among Maudud's disciples, Ruknu'd-Din Muhammad, who came from a village called Sanjan, in Khwaf, and Khwaja Hajji Sharif, were also prominent sufis. Khwaja Hajji Sharif appointed Khwaja 'Usman, from Harwan near Nishapur, as his successor.[7]

The deaths of Khwaja Maudud's disciples marked the end of the great spiritual peak in sufism which had occurred in Chisht. Some of their disciples moved elsewhere or lived as wandering dervishes. The rise of the Ghurid Turks in the tenth century, and the founding of the fortress of Firuzkuh on the headwaters of the Hari Rud by a Ghurid king, Qutbu'd-Din Muhammad, deprived Chisht of its former peaceful existence as it was close to the fortress. The region became a fierce battle ground between rival Turkic tribes. Tranquillity returned to the region only after the rise to power of Sultan Ghiyasu'd-Din Muhammad, who ruled as Sultan of Ghur from 1163 to 1203. His brother, Mu'izzu'd-Din Muhammad, the founder of the Shansabani dynasty in India, governed at Ghazna between 1173 and 1206. The capital of Ghiyasu'd-Din was Firuzkuh. The spoils of conquests had made it affluent in the same manner that two centuries earlier Ghazna, under Sultan Mahmud, had become wealthy. Many prominent poets and scholars settled in Firuzkuh, but the town was not favourably disposed towards the sufi movement. In Chisht itself, Ghiyasu'd-Din Muhammad built a *madrasa* and a mosque, but Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Chishti, one of the greatest sufis of

[1] *NU*, pp. 322-23.
[2] *NU*, pp. 323-24.
[3] *NU*, p. 324.
[4] *NU*, pp. 325-26.
[5] *NU*, pp. 326-27.
[6] *NU*, pp. 330-31.
[7] Some Indian Chishti genealogical trees do not mention Khwaja Ahmad or Ruknu'd-Din, *Khairu'l-Majalis*, p. 8.

the middle ages, decided to settle in the east in Ajmer, on the borders of the Ghurid empire.

Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din

Both medieval and modern scholars have showered copious praise on Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Chishti, but no reliable information regarding his early life, before he settled in Ajmer, remains. The only information recorded is the name of the area where he was born, the name of his teacher, and the fact that he had travelled widely. Strangely enough, the voluminous book, *Khairu'l-Majalis*, does not mention Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din in any connection, and the *Fawa'idu'l-Fu'ad* refers to him merely in passing.

The earliest works which relate anecdotes of the early life of Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Chishti and his encounters with the court of Prithviraj at Ajmer are the apocryphal *malfuzats*. These tend to indicate that within about a hundred and fifty years of his death, the Khwaja had become a legend in India. The *Siyaru'l-Auliya'*, drawing on this literary source and also on family anecdotes, gives the following account of the Khwaja.

Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Sijzi was the embodiment of sufi virtues and famous for his outstanding spiritual achievements, which included the performance of miracles. He was the *khalifa* of Khwaja 'Usman Harwani, an eminent Chishti sufi who lived in Nishapur. Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din related that after he had entered the service of Khwaja 'Usman Harwani and been enrolled as his disciple, he then served his master for twenty years without a moment's rest. Finding him steadfast both in service and the practice of spiritual exercises, the Khwaja passed on to his disciple divine blessings which he himself had acquired.

The Sultanu'l-Masha'ikh (Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya') believed that when Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din reached Ajmer, India was ruled by Pithaura Ra'i (Prithviraj) and his capital was Ajmer. Pithaura and his high officials resented the Shaikh's presence in their city, but the latter's eminence and his apparent power to perform miracles, prompted them to refrain from taking action against him. A disciple of the Khwaja's was in the service of Pithaura Ra'i. After the disciple began to receive hostile treatment from the Ra'i, the Khwaja sent a message to Pithaura in favour of the Muslim. Pithaura refused to accept the recommendation, thus indicating his resentment of the Khwaja's alleged claims to understand the secrets of the Unseen. When Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din (the spiritual King of Islam) heard of this reply he prophesied: 'We have seized Pithaura alive and handed him over to the army of Islam.' About the same time, Sultan Mu'izzu'd-Din Muhammad's army arrived from Ghazna, attacked the forces of Pithaura and defeated them. Pithaura was taken alive, and thus the Khwaja's prophesy was fulfilled.[1]

[1]Amir Khwurd, *Siyaru'l-Auliya'*, Delhi, 1885, pp. 45-7.

The *Akhbaru'l-Akhyar* also contains the same account,[1] and a large number of medieval and modern scholars confirm the validity of the story and recount fantastic miracles performed by the Khwaja at Ajmer.[2] A modern author states rather naively:

[1] *AA*, pp. 22-23.

[2] Some of the anecdotes from the *Jawahir-i Faridi* written in 1623 are as follows. Twelve years before the Khwaja's arrival at Ajmer, Pithaura's mother, an expert in astronomy and magic, had prophesied the Khwaja's arrival. She drew pictures of the Khwaja and the Ra'i distributed them to his officers to prevent his entry into the kingdom. Every foreigner's face was compared with that picture. When the Khwaja reached Delhi from Lahore, the people of Delhi would run away at the sight of Muslims. The Khwaja stayed in Delhi with his forty disciples only because of his spiritual power. *The Fawaidu'l-Fu'ad* says that seven hundred people, besides Hamidu'd-Din Dihlawi, embraced Islam, although this story is not recorded in the *Fawaidu'l-Fu'ad*. From there the Khwaja went to Ajmer. At Samana, Pithaura's officials recognized the Khwaja from his picture and, requested that he stay in the palace. But the Prophet Muhammad had warned the Khwaja, during meditation, against the treachery of officials so he left for Ajmer. Reaching there he decided to sit under a tree, but the camel keepers ordered him away as the area belonged to the Ra'i. The Khwaja and his followers moved to a place near the Anasagar Lake. His servants killed a cow and cooked kebabs for him. Some members of the Khwaja's party went to Anasagar and the others to Pansela Lake for ablutions. There were one thousand temples on the two lakes. The Brahmans stopped the ablutions and the party complained to the Khwaja. He sent his servant to bring water for his ewer. As soon as the ewer touched the Pansela Lake, all the lakes, tanks and wells around became dry. The Khwaja went to the Anasagar Lake temple and asked the name of the idol. He was told it was called Sawi Deva. The Khwaja asked whether the idol had talked to them. On receiving a negative reply he made the idol recite *kalima* and converted it into a human being, naming it Sa'di. This caused a sensation in the town. Prithviraj ordered his prime minister Jaipal who was also a magician, to avert the evil influence of the Khwaja. Jaipal proceeded to fight the Khwaja with 700 magical dragons, 1,500 magical discs and 700 disciples. The Khwaja drew a circle bringing his party within it under his protection, and succeeded in killing all the dragons and disciples. Pithaura and Jaipal begged the Khwaja's forgiveness. The Khwaja's prayers restored water to the lakes, tanks and wells. A large number of people accepted Islam. Jaipal decided to compete with the Khwaja in the performance of miracles. Sitting on his deer skin he flew to the heavens. The Khwaja ordered his slippers to bring Jaipal back to earth, which they did. On Jaipal's request to show him some miracles, the Khwaja's spirit flew to the highest heaven, where Jaipal also joined him. Getting nearer to the divine presence, on the Khwaja's orders Jaipal accepted Islam in order to gain the full benefit of that spiritual bliss. When they returned the Khwaja and his party stayed in the town. Pithaura refused to accept Islam and the Khwaja prophesied he would be handed over to the Islamic army. 'Ali Asghar Chishti, *Jawahir-i Faridi*, Lahore, 1884, pp. 155-60. Abu'l-Fazl relates: 'Before Sultan Mu'izzu'd-Din Sam came from Ghazni to India, his *pir* permitted him to leave for India. He settled at Ajmer, where Ra'i Pithaura, the ruler of India, resided'. *Akbar Nama*, II, Calcutta, 1879, p. 154. In the *A'in-i Akbari* he writes: 'In the same year that Mu'izzu'd-Din Sam seized Delhi, he (the Khwaja) arrived at that city and, in order to lead a life of seclusion, he withdrew to Ajmer.' *A'in*, III, p. 168. Both latter accounts make the Khwaja's encounter with Prithviraj an impossibility. *See* also *Gulshan-i Ibrahimi*, Lucknow, nd, *maqala*, XII, p. 377. Muhammad Sadiq Dihlawi says that in the year in which Sultan Mu'izzu'd-Din defeated Raja Pithaura and seized Delhi the Khwaja reached Lahore from Ghazni and from there left for the capital. *Kalimatu's-Sadiqin*, Mashhad MS., 7879, p. 23. So Firishta's account that the Khwaja reached Ajmer after its conquest concurs with Abul-Fazl's.

'Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din laid the foundations of the Chishti order in India and worked out its principles at Ajmer, the seat of Chawhan power. No authentic details are available about the way he worked in the midst of a population which looked askance at every foreigner. It appears that his stay was disliked by Prithvi Raj and the caste Hindus but the common people flocked to him in large numbers'.[1]

A very detailed, interesting account of Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din is given in the *Siyaru'l-'Arifin*, whose author, Jamali, collected legends from both India and Iran. As pointed out earlier, the anecdotes which his hosts in Irani khanqahs related are not necessarily correct, but they are set in the perspective of contemporary mystical traditions, and Jamali cannot be censured for accepting them. Below is a summary of Jamali's account.

[1]K.A. Nizami, *EI* (new), II, p. 50. In an earlier work he writes:

'Ajmer was not merely the seat of Chauhan power; it was religious centre also where thousands of pilgrims assembled from far and near. Shaikh Mu'inu'd-Din's determination to work out the principles of Islamic mysticism at a place of such political and religious significance shows great self-confidence. Unfortunately, no details are available about the way he worked in the midst of a population which looked askance at every foreigner. It cannot, however, be denied that his stay in Ajmer must have been a serious trial for the principles of the Chishti *silsilah*. On his success or failure in Ajmer depended the future of the Muslim mystic movement in Hindustan. Some of his sayings, as recorded by Mir Khurd, supply the quintessence of his religious and social ideology and reveal him as a man of wide sympathies, catholic views and deep humanism.' *Some aspects of religion and politics in India during the thirteenth century*, Aligarh, 1961, p. 184. It is obvious that in his story of Hindu mistrust of Islam, Nizami borrows from al-Biruni, who relates only the situation created by the plundering raids of Mahmud of Ghazna. E.C. Sachau, *Alberuni's India*, I, 1964, 22-3. Although Nizami admits that authentic details were unavailable, he did not hesitate to claim that Prithviraj and the high caste Hindus disliked the Khwaja nevertheless the common people flocked to him. This only indicates the thinking of modern Muslims who seek the support of a theory that the caste system was responsible for the Hindu defeat in India and that by it Islam rescued the low caste Hindus from degredation. It is curious that Nizami writes a section on Muslim settlements before the Ghurid conquest in his book, mostly on the basis of legends contained in the *District Gazetteers*, pp. 76-9, and neglects to ask the question 'How could Hindus amongst whom Muslims lived look "askance at every foreigner?"'

A more quaint appraisal of the Khwaja's work by another modern Muslim scholar is as follows:

'From Lahore Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Chishti went to Delhi and then to Ajmer, which was ruled by Ra'i Prithivi Raj. One cannot think without admiration of this man, almost alone, living among people who considered the least contact with a Muslim as defilement. Sometimes he was refused water to drink. In the torrid climate of Rajputana this was the hardest punishment one can imagine. The high-caste priests demanded of the Raja of Ajmer that he should banish the Khwaja, whose influence had begun to make itself felt among the lower classes of the place. The Raja sent the order of expulsion through Ram Deo, head of the priests of Ajmer. Legend relates that in approaching the Khwaja, Ram Deo was so much impressed by his personality that he became, from that moment, a faithful disciple of the Khwaja and spent the rest of his life in the service of the helpless and downtrodden. After the death of the Khwaja in 1234, his numerous disciples continued his apostolic work.' Yusuf Husain, *Glimpses of medieval Indian culture*, Bombay, 1957, p. 37.

The Khwaja was born[1] in Sijistan (Sistan) and brought up in Khurasan. His father, Khwaja Ghiyasu'd-Din Hasan, was a most pious and God-fearing man. When he died the Khwaja was fifteen years old. The Khwaja lived on the earnings from a garden and a water-mill, inherited from his father. One day, while working in the garden, a *majzub* (ecstatic) named Ibrahim Qunduzi passed by. The Khwaja, kissing his hands, offered the *majzub* a seat under the trees, while placing before him a bunch of grapes. The *majzub* took out some sesame seeds, chewed them, and put them in Mu'inu'd-Din's mouth. This aroused in him a great spiritual illumination. After a few days Mu'inu'd-Din sold his possessions and distributed the money amongst the local dervishes.[2] For many years he lived in Samarqand and Bukhara, learning the *Qur'an* and studying theology. From there he travelled to Harwan, a suburb of Nishapur, where under Shaikh 'Usman Harwani, he practised rigorous austerities for about two and a half years.[3] The Shaikh was highly

[1]As he died on 6 Rajab 633 Hijri at the age of ninety-seven, he must have been born in 536/1141-42. Abu'l Fazl says he was born in 537/1142-43. *A'in-i Akbari*, III, Lucknow, 1893, p. 168.

[2]Nizami believes that the devastation of the Qara Khita and Ghuzz Turks drove 'the Shaikh's mind inwards and he realized the futility of hankering after worldly glory or looking after worldly goods.' *Some aspects of religion and politics in India*, p. 183. The Ghuzz invasion of Sistan began in 564/1168-69, see *Tarikh-i Sistan*, Tehran, nd, p. 391; they were therefore not responsible for the Khwaja's migration from Sistan. After 523/1129 Sistan was repeatedly subjected to Isma'ili incursions, *Tarikh-i Sistan*, pp. 391-92. It would seem that neither of the two raids were the cause of the Khwaja's migration. He was prompted to devote his life to education and to spiritual perfection through his introspective temperament, and the visit of Khwaja Ibrahim would have been only a minor incentive. As he is believed to have met Shaikh 'Abdu'l Qadir Jilani, who died in 1166, he would have left Sistan shortly after his father's death.

Amir Khwurd's statement that he served as Shaikh 'Usman's apprentice for twenty years does not correlate with the Khwaja's visit to Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir. It is, however, not unlikely that the Khwaja met his teacher again in Khurasan and Central Asia and stayed with him for a few more years. Jamali, who earlier stated that the Khwaja was appointed the *khalifa* of Shaikh 'Usman, relates, in a different context, that Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din obtained his *khirqa* from Shaikh 'Usman at the age of fifty-two, Jamali, p. 7. This would imply that he received his *khirqa* in 588/1192-93 in the Ghazna region, and later left for India after having first obtained permission from Shaikh 'Usman. This would also make the Khwaja's visit to India before the Ghurid conquest impossible. Jamali relates that Shaikh 'Usman so dearly loved Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din that he himself began a journey walking behind his disciple. After travelling some distance he reached a Zoroastrian fire temple. He sat under a tree and asked his servant to bring him some fire. The priests would not allow him to take it. The Shaikh went himself to the fire worshippers. Their leader was seated on a throne with his seven-year old son on his lap. Shaikh 'Usman asked if their hands were put into the fire would they be burnt. At the receipt of a negative reply the Shaikh snatched the boy and jumped into the fire with him. After some hours they both emerged unharmed. The head priest embraced Islam and the fire temple was demolished. Shaikh 'Usman stayed there for about two and a half years. Jamali, pp. 8-9. In the *Khairu'l-Majalis* the Zoroastrian priests are replaced by Hindus and the conversation is reported in the Hindawi, *KM*, p. 54.

[3]Jamali, p. 5.

impressed and gave Mu'inu'd-Din a *khirqa*, appointing him his *khalifa*.[1] The Khwaja set off for Baghdad and, reaching Sanjan, met Shaikh Najmu'd-Din Kubra.[2] He lived with the Shaikh for a short period, then moved to Jil where he stayed with Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani for eight weeks. The Khwaja's next long stay was at Baghdad, a week's journey from Jil. There he kept company with such sufi saints as Shaikh Ziya'u'd-Din,[3] the uncle and teacher of Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi, Shaikh Auhadu'd-Din Kirmani[4] and Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din[5] himself.

From Baghdad the Khwaja returned to Hamadan where he met Shaikh Yusuf Hamadani. From there he went to Tabriz and saw Shaikh Abu Sa'id Tabrizi, the teacher of Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din Tabrizi. Then he went to Mayhana and Kharqan and visited the tombs of Shaikh Abu Sa'id bin Abi'l Khair and Shaikh Abu'l-Hasan Kharqani. The Khwaja remained for about two years in that region, and then travelled to Astarabad where he visited the tomb of Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Astarabadi. From Astarabad, Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din went to Herat where he lived near the tomb of Khwaja 'Abdu'llah Ansari. Refusing to remain in one place, the Khwaja, accompanied by a servant, wandered throughout the area surrounding Herat. His fame attracted a large number of people. He disapproved of such popularity and fame, and left for Sabzwar,[6] where he converted the local Shi'i governor, Muhammad Yadgar, to Sunni orthodoxy.[7] After some time, accompanied by Muhammad

[1]Jamali, pp. 6-7. [2]The celebrated founder of the Kubrawiyya order, *see* Chapter One.

[3]Shaikh Ziya'u'd-Din Abu'n-Najib as Suhrawardi, *see* Chapter One.

[4]Ziya'u'd Din died in 563/1168. Jamali says that this was the beginning of Shaikh Auhadu'd-Din Kirmani's mystic career, but as he died in 697/1298, the meeting would have been impossible.

[5]Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din was only three years younger than his distinguished visitor, *see* pp. 86-8, *supra*. Jamali's statement is confusing. It relates that he visited the three saints but according to Firishta, the Khwaja went to Isfahan from Tabriz and then went to Kharaqan and Astarabad. *Gulshan-i Ibrahimi*, p. 376. A visit to Isfahan is not unlikely but it might have taken place during his journey from Baghdad to Tabriz, *via* Isfahan and Hamadan.

[6]This means that he returned from modern Afghanistan to the Khurasan region.

[7]Sabzwar was notorious for Shi'i sympathies. Mulla 'Abdu'l-Qadir Bada'uni gives an interesting anecdote concerning Sabzwar.

'This state of affairs reminds us of the story that a certain king who was a bigoted Sunni who led an army against Sabzwar, which is a hotbed of schism, its inhabitants being all fanatics. The chief men of the place came out and made their representations to the king, saying, "We are Musalmans; what fault have we committed that you should have brought an army against us?" The king replied, "Your fault is your zeal for schism." They replied, "This is a false accusation that has been brought against us." The king said, "Produce from your city in support of your allegation a man of the name of Abu Bakr, and I will swerve from my intention of slaying you and of plundering your city." After much search and with much difficulty they produced before the king an unknown pauper, saying, "This man is called by the name which you desired." After observing the man's old garments and despicable condition, the king asked, "Had you nobody better than this to produce before me?" They said, "O king, ceremony apart, the climate of Sabzwar cherishes an Abu Bakr no better than this." And the *Maulavi-yi-Ma'nawi* (May his tomb be hallowed) refers to this story in his *Masnawi* as follows:

Yadgar, the Khwaja reached Hisar Shadman.[1] Leaving Yadgar at Hisar Shadman, the Khwaja travelled to Balkh. There he miraculously converted Maulana Ziya'u'd-Din Hakim to sufism. The Maulana was a philosopher and considered sufism the delirious ravings of lunatics. He ran a seminary and a garden in the vicinity of Balkh. The Khwaja went to the Maulana's seminary, so the story goes, where he killed a crane and asked his servants to make a fire to roast it. The cooked bird was brought to the Khwaja who offered a leg to the Maulana and began to eat another himself. As soon as the Maulana had eaten the leg he underwent a deep spiritual experience, after which all philosophical learnings were obliterated from his mind. He threw his philosophy books into the river and also abandoned his property. The Maulana's students became followers of Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din. The Khwaja appointed Ziya'u'd-Din his deputy in Balkh and left for Ghazna.

In Ghazna, Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din met Shamsu'l-'Arifin 'Abdu'l-Wahid, the preceptor of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Abu'l-Muy'id.[2] From there he reached Lahore and stayed near the tombs of Shaikh Husain Zanjani and Shaikh 'Ali Hujwiri.[3]

Meanwhile, Mu'izzu'd-Din Muhammad bin Sam had conquered Delhi and, departing for Ghazni, left his favourite slave, Qutbu'd-Din Aibak, as head of his forces in the occupied city. On route to Ghazni, Sultan Mu'izzu'd-Din died. The Khwaja left Lahore for Delhi where he

> "This unstable world is a Sabzwar to us,
> We, like Bu-Bakrs, live in it mean and despised."

W. Haig, *Muntakhabu't-Tawarikh*, III, Calcutta, 1925, pp. 117-18. Jamali says that Muhammad Yadgar was a scoundrel and a Shi'i. He abused the Prophet's companions and was cruel to people who were even called Abu Bakr, 'Umar or 'Usman. He built a beautiful garden near the town where he indulged in debauchery. One day the Khwaja rested in the garden. Yadgar Muhammad came to the garden and the sight of the Khwaja frightened both him and the people with him. Yadgar placed his head at the Khwaja's feet and his followers fell prostrate before him. Repenting of his sins, Yadgar became a Sunni. The Khwaja initiated him into his discipleship. On his *pir's* advice, Yadgar freed his slaves and sought the forgiveness of those he had previously victimized. Jamali's account of Yadgar's conversation is a stock-in-trade sufi story, similar to later ones involving the Khwaja's conversion of Hindus.

[1] Before the Arab conquest the place was called Shuman. From the ninth century it was known as Hisar Shuman and in the 14th century it came to be called Hisar Shadman. After the Russian conquest of Bukhara, in 1868, Hisar came to be called Gissar.

[2] Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Abu'l-Mu'yid was a contemporary of the Khwaja and migrated to Delhi. He was famous for his masterly religious sermons. Shamsu'l-'Arifin was said to have been his grandfather. Among the descendants of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din, Shaikh Jamal became very famous at Kol (Aligarh), where he also died. *AA*, p. 46.

[3] Jamali says that the same year the Khwaja reached Lahore, Shaikh 'Ali Hujwiri died but that Shaikh Husain Zanjani was still alive. According to *Fawa'idu'l-Fu'ad*, Hujwiri reached Lahore in the year Shaikh Husain Zanjani died. According to Abu'l-Fazl, Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din lived with Shaikh Husaini Zanjani. *Ain*, III, p. 168. *Fawaidu'l Fu'ad's* statement appears to be correct and it is likely that the Khwaja stayed near the two tombs. Firishta simply mentions that after leaving Ghazna, the Khwaja stayed at Lahore.

remained for some months. During this period he stayed at a place which is now marked by the grave of Shaikh Rashid Makki. Traces still remain of the arch of the Khwaja's mosque.

Once again crowds of followers and devotees gathered around the Khwaja and he was forced to leave Delhi for Ajmer. Although the region had already been 'glorified' (conquered) by Islam, the local tribesmen (*kafirs*) indulged in continual raiding near Ajmer. Qutbu'd-Din had appointed Saiyid Husain Mashhadi as the *darogha* (military governor) of the area. The Saiyid served the Khwaja with great devotion. He was killed by tribesmen and buried in Tulambli. Many prominent *kafirs* of the region accepted Islam because of the *barakat* (blessings) of the *asar* (relics, monuments or traditions) of that (embodiment of) sufism, meaning the Khwaja, who contained 'the essence of the divine secrets.' Even those who refused to accept Islam would send large offerings and *futuh* to what Jamali called *Hazrat Ishan* (His Holiness Court, here meaning tomb). Even today, the *kafirs* of that area are devoted to the Khwaja's tomb in the same manner as their ancestors had been. They visit it each year and 'prostrate themselves on the dust of the tomb of that eminent one and the full moon of the heavens of his sainthood.'[1] At the same time, large amounts of money are paid to those who tend the shrine.[2]

Despite some discrepancies noted in footnotes, and his acceptance of stock-in-trade anecdotes of sufism, Jamali's research on the Khwaja's career appears, to a large degree, to be factual. He was convinced that the Khwaja left for Delhi after Mu'izzu'd-Din's death on 15 March 1206, and he seems to have reached Ajmer towards the end of the same year. The inconsistencies between the Chishti legend and Jamali's study are irreconcilable, but the latter's account is supported to a greater degree by political events and the Khwaja's own philosophy of what entailed a saintly life. Politically, Mu'izzu'd-Din's victory in 1192 over Prithviraj at the battle of Tarain failed to make the Turks masters of the whole of northern India. Occupying troops stationed at Indraprastha near Delhi under Qutbu'd-Din Aibak were forced to make several invasions in the Doab and the regions around Ajmer to consolidate their power. It was only around 1206 that continual Turkic raids finally liquidated Rajput resistance. Moreover after Mu'izzu'd-Din's death, Lahore had become the capital, and this would naturally have impelled Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din to seek another home; he left both Lahore and Delhi and ultimately chose Ajmer, on the borders of the Delhi Sultanate, for this purpose.

[1]Jamali's account is unclear. However, it does not refer to conversions made by the Khwaja himself, but to the process of conversions beside the Khwaja's shrine which was visited by the Hindus of the region. Firishta, however, says that a number of *kafirs* embraced Islam because of the Khwaja's spiritual blessings. *Gulshan-i Ibrahimi*, p. 377. According to Abu'l-Fazl the Khwaja: 'lit a large number of (spiritual) lamps and crowds of people benefitted from his intuitive soul.' *Ain*, III, 168. Abu'l-Fazl's statement does not necessarily imply conversion. It would seem that the beneficiaries were the Muslims.

[2]Jamali, *Siyaru'l-'Arifin*, Delhi, 1893, pp. 5-13.

By so doing, he followed the tradition of the founders of the Chishti *silsila*, who had chosen for their activities remote Chisht, rather than other great centres of political power either in Iran or Central Asia.

Jamali's evidence is substantiated by the seventeenth century work, *Gulzar-i Abrar*, whose author had at his disposal a multitude of sources. It adds that Saiyid Mashhadi exhibited great courage in the conversion of some *zimmis*[1] to Islam, and by helping to make others subservient to Muslim rule.[2]

It would appear that the Khwaja lived in Ajmer fort and his simple, ascetic life was an inspiration to both the Turkic *ghazis*, who swelled the Islamic forces through a lust for plunder, and to the Hindus who were forcibly converted to Islam. His style of living tended to remind both conqueror and vanquished of the social ethics of Islam, as interpreted by sufis, which attached no importance to material power and wealth, stressing only piety, simplicity and devotion to God.

A story about the Khwaja during his period at Ajmer involved a dervish who visited him, and asked what was expected of a true ascetic. The Khwaja replied that according to the *Shari'a* one who fully obeyed the commandments of God and abstained from what He had forbidden had, in fact, renounced the world. But the *Tariqa* prescribed nine conditions each of which had to be followed, otherwise one could not be called a real dervish. Upon being requested to specify these conditions, the Khwaja asked his disciple, Hamidu'd-Din Nagauri, to both explain and write them down so that such rules could be made known to a wider section of Muslims. Shaikh Hamidu'd-Din described the ascetic path as follows:

1. One should not earn money.
2. One should not borrow money from anyone.
3. One should not reveal to anyone nor seek help from anyone if one has eaten nothing, even for seven days.
4. If one gains plenty of food, money, grain or clothing, one should not keep anything until the following day.
5. One should not curse anyone; if anyone is very hurt, one should pray to God to guide one's enemy towards the right path.
6. If one performs a virtuous deed, one should consider that the source of the virtue is due either to one's *pir's* kindness, to the intercession

[1]*Ahl al-Zimma*, a non-Muslim subject of a Muslim state, such as Jews and Christians who paid the poll-tax and were regarded as protected subjects. Later Zoroastrians were also given the status of *zimmis*. Idolaters, however, were not regarded as *zimmis*. On the analogy that the idol worshippers of Arabia were not given the status of *zimmis*, many jurists also refused to regard Hindus or Buddhists as *zimmis*. From the time of the earliest conquest of the Arabs by Muhammad bin Qasim in 711-13, Hindus and Buddhists, however, have been recognized as *zimmis*.

[2]Ghausi Shattari, *Gulzar-i Abrar*, Manchester manuscript, f. 11a.

of the Prophet Muhammad on one's behalf, or to divine mercy.

7. If one performs an evil deed one should consider one's evil self responsible for the action, and try to protect oneself from such deeds. Fearing God, one should be careful to avoid actions which may involve him again in evil.
8. Having fulfilled all the above conditions, one should regularly fast during the day and spend the night in prayer.
9. One should remain quiet, and speak only when it is imperative to do so. The *Shari'a* makes it unlawful both to talk incessantly and keep totally silent. One should utter only such words as those which please God.[1]

These lofty principles were the sole guide to the Khwaja's mystic path. His sufi views were based on the statements of Abu Sa'id bin Abi'l Khair, Khwaja 'Abdullah Ansari and 'Ainu'l-Quzat Hamadani, which involved a belief in the concept of an ecstatic love for God. This, according to the Khwaja, did not allow a differentiation between the lover, the beloved and love itself. The distinguishing mark of one who had recognized God was his flight from crowds of people (*khalq*). The *hajjis* walked around the Ka'ba, but the '*arifs* (spiritualists) circumambulated the heart. The most superior kind of worship was to assist the helpless and to feed the hungry. All those possessing the following three virtues were friends of God: munificence like an ocean, kindness like the sunshine and humility like the earth.[2]

After finally settling at Ajmer, Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din, who until then had been celibate, took two wives. According to tradition he decided to marry in order to imitate all the Prophet's practices. The *Sururu's-Sudur* states he was then ninety,[3] but this would appear to be incorrect. A few years after his arrival at Ajmer, he married the daughter of Saiyid Wajihu'd-Din, a brother of Saiyid Husain Mashhadi. Ghausi Shattari's statement that the Khwaja and his wife lived together for twenty-seven years[4] would seem to be reinforced by circumstantial evidence. The wedding seems to have taken place in 606/1209–10. The Khwaja's second wife was a daughter of a local Hindu chieftain who had been seized in war.[5] Both are said to have borne the Khwaja children.[6]

During his period spent in Ajmer, the Khwaja twice visited Delhi.

[1]*Sururu's-Sudur*, Habibganj collection, Aligarh University manuscript, pp. 51-2.
[2]*SA*, pp. 46-7.
[3]*Sururu's-Sudur*, p. 227.
[4]*Gulzar-i Abrar*, f. 15a.
[5]*AA*, p. 114.
[6]The Khwaja's three sons were called Shaikh Abu Sa'id, Shaikh Fakhru'd-Din and Shaikh Husamu'd-Din. The first was the son of the daughter of Mashhadi. According to some authorities the mother of Shaikh Fakhru'd-Din and Husamu'd-Din was the Raja's daughter, but other people believed that Mashhadi's daughter was their mother. *AA*, p. 114.

According to the *Siyaru'l-Auliya'*, he had an *ihya'*[1] village near Ajmer. The *muqta'*[2] of Ajmer urged him to obtain a royal *farman*[3] for the land. On the insistence of his son, the Khwaja went to Delhi to obtain a *farman* and stayed with Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar, who requested his master to stay in his house while he went to Sultan Iltutmish, who was well disposed to sufis. Despite the Sultan's earlier requests, Qutbu'd-Din had never previously visited him and this unexpected call naturally elated him. He immediately granted the *farman*.[4] Undoubtedly this anecdote is apocryphal. Firstly, no *muqta'* would dare to harass the Khwaja to gain a *farman* for wasteland. Secondly, the Khwaja could have sent a messenger to Qutbu'd-Din Bakhatiyar and gained a *farman* without personally going to Delhi. In fact a large number of the Khwaja's friends from the eastern Islamic world had migrated to Delhi and Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar had also settled there. The Khwaja made his first visit to the Sultan's capital sometime after 1221. It appears that Shaikhu'l-Islam Najmu'd-Din Sughra, who will be referred to later in greater detail, had joined with other sufis in inviting the Khwaja to Delhi.[5] The latter made a further trip there apparently in order to be personally acquainted with the struggle between the 'ulama' and the Chishtis and the general crisis brewing in the life of sufis in Delhi.

Ajmer

On 6 Rajab 633/16 March 1236, Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din died in Ajmer at the old age of ninety-seven.[6] His earthly remains were buried at the place where he had spent most of his life. The original grave was of bricks, later a stone cenotaph was built over it, leaving the brick construction intact. Khwaja Husain Nagauri built a tomb over the grave.[7] A khanqah on the tomb site was built by the rulers of Mandu, probably

[1]In Muslim legal literature *Ihya'* means 'bringing to life' and refers to unclaimed land lying fallow in distant and unpopulated areas. *Ihya'* becomes the property of anyone who cultivates it. According to *Hanafi* law, the previous authorization from the *Imam* is essential. At the beginning of Turkic rule in India, land was in abundance and the cultivators of waste lands were recognized as *de facto* owners and no advance authorization was apparently demanded.

[2]The chief officer of an *Iqta'* or revenue grant made to military chiefs in order to consolidate the power of the government, collect the revenue and maintain an army for military and administrative purposes.

[3]A royal command or authorization, an edict.

[4]*SA*, p. 47.

[5]*Sururu's-Sudur*, pp. 15-6.

[6]*AA*, p. 23; *A'in*, III, p. 168. The age is calculated according to the lunar Hijri calendar. Biographical notes on the Khwaja are given in the following works: *SA*, pp. 45-8. Muhammad Bihamad Khani, *Tarikh-i Muhammadi*, British Museum Rieu, I, 841, f. 140b; *AA*, pp. 22-5, Jamali, pp. 6-16; *A'in*, p. 168; *Gulzar-i Abrar*, f. 15a; *Gulshan-i Ibrahimi*, pp. 375-77; 'Abdu'r Rahman Chishti; *Mir'atu'l-Asrar*; ff. 221a-31a; Ghulam Mu'inu'd Din, *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, Panjab University manuscript, ff. 2a-12b.

[7]*AA*, p. 182.

by Mahmud Khalji (1436–69). A gateway known as Buland Darwaza (High Gateway) seems to have been constructed near the tomb by Mahmud Khalji in 1455. The Malwa Sultans also built another mosque in the tomb complex, which was later extended by Jahangir and Aurangzeb.

Akbar's desire to make a pilgrimage to the Khwaja's shrine occurred after hearing the songs of some minstrels at Midhakur, near Agra, glorifying the Khwaja.[1] He commenced his journey on 14 January 1562. A number of Akbar's humanitarian reforms date from that time. His marriage to the daughter of Raja Bihara Mal, and the birth of the crown prince, Salim, which was attributed to the spiritual intervention of the famous Chishti saint, Shaikh Salim of Sikri,[2] further increased the Emperor's devotion to the Khwaja. Akbar's earlier visit to Ajmer had been as a devotee of the Khwaja. Later the location of Ajmer in the heart of the Rajput states and on the route to Gujarat, which Akbar was to later conquer, gave Ajmer a new political significance. After his Chitor conquest, Akbar made a pilgrimage to Ajmer on 6 March 1568. On this occasion he presented the Khwaja's khanqah with a huge cauldron. Wealth from the offerings of Akbar and his entourage resulted in a dispute for it amongst the Khwaja's descendants. In February 1570, Akbar reached Ajmer by foot from Agra to offer thanks for the birth of Prince Salim on 30 August 1569. The dispute over alleged family successors of the Khwaja between Shaikh Husain, who claimed to be a descendant, and his rivals, was placed before the Emperor for judgement. The Shaikh's opponents alleged that the Khwaja had left no descendants and that the claims of Shaikh Husain were false. The descendants of Shaikh Salim and some qazis supported Shaikh Husain's rivals. After a laborious investigation, Akbar ruled against the Shaikh, and transferred the administration of the shrine to Shaikh Muhammad Bukhari, a trusted officer and a member of a distinguished family of holy men. It would appear that Shaikh Muhammad greatly improved the shrine's management while attempting to provide better conditions for pilgrims.[3] Moreover, he looked after the erection of mosques and khanqahs in the territory. The great mosque of Ajmer was built under his supervision.

Early in 1614, Akbar's successor, Jahangir, stayed in Ajmer and presented a smaller cauldron than Akbar's, to the shrine. Food for the poor was cooked and 5,000 assembled people were fed from the cauldron.[4] The two survive, but the gold enclosure around the cenotaph, donated by Jahangir, has been replaced by a silver one. Shah-Jahan constructed

[1]Abu'l Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, II, Calcutta, 1879, p. 154.

[2]cf. S.A.A. Rizvi and V.J.A. Flynn, *Fathpur-Sikri*, Bombay, 1975, *see* Chapter One.

[3]'Abdu'l-Qadir Bada'uni, *Muntakhabu't-Tawarikh*, III, p. 87. For details of earlier disputes *see* Chapter Four, also S.A.A. Rizvi, *Religious and intellectual history of Akbar's reign*, Delhi, 1975, pp. 182-83.

[4]Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i Jahangiri*, Ghazipur and Aligarh, 1863-64, p. 125.

a mosque of white marble in the tomb complex and added a gateway.

Both Jahangir and Shah Jahan distributed generous gifts to all connected with the Khwaja's tomb. A story associated with Aurangzeb's first visit to the mosque is as follows. Because the Emperor's officers had stopped the musicians from playing, they refused to accept the customary gift. On a subsequent visit, the Emperor prevented his officers from interfering with the playing of music performed in memory of the Khwaja. The anecdote relates that the Emperor was deeply moved by it and paid the musicians double the normal gift.[1]

Nagaur

In close contact with Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Chishti during his lifetime was his young disciple, Shaikh Hamidu'd-Din. The latter's real name was Muhammad. His father, Ahmad, migrated from Lahore to Delhi where the Shaikh was born after its conquest in 1192. The story that in his youth he was extremely handsome and led a gay life before becoming the Khwaja's disciple is apocryphal. His early teachers were Maulana Shamsu'd-Din Halwa'i and Shaikh Muhammad Juwaiyni. Hamidu'd-Din received an excellent education, both in Arabic and Persian and had a good command of the Hindawi dialect of Rajasthan. Both his mother and wife were virtuous women, and their influence on the Shaikh's life was very deep. He became the Khwaja's disciple at Ajmer and accompanied him on his first visit to Delhi. During this visit he amazed his audience, which was far from uneducated, by telling them that the greatest contemporary Shaikh was *jital* (copper coin), and that he who possessed *jital* in abundance was marked as a Shaikh.[2] This analogy implied that piety was of little concern to anyone for people were only attracted to worldly riches.

Shaikh Hamidu'd-Din led a withdrawn, ascetic life. According to tradition, on one occasion Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din asked his companions to request anything of God and it would be granted. Some asked for riches, others begged for a glorious eternity, but the Shaikh replied that he desired nothing as he had already surrendered himself to the divine will. Such an annihilation of self-desire resulted in the Khwaja bestowing on his disciple the title *Sultanu't-Tarikin*[3] (King of Hermits). This indeed benefited the saint who was to firmly place the sufi movement and the Chishti order in its new Indian environment.

Although Chishti saints were permitted to receive cash gifts, the Shaikh believed that his own path was different. Hamidu'd-Din had a small *ihya'* plot in the village of Suwali, near Nagaur. He lived from the income it gave and drank milk from his one cow, refusing offers from

[1]Frazer's, *History of Aurangzeb*, Bodleian, 262, ff. 11b-12a.
[2]*Sururu's-Sudur*, p. 16.
[3]*AA*, p. 30.

both the *muqta'* of Nagaur and the Sultan for more land and money. His wife did her own spinning and the yarn sufficed for their meagre clothing. He also strongly advocated that no harm be done to any form of life, and pleaded with his followers to be totally vegetarian. Before his death he requested his descendants not to distribute meat for his soul's peace. On being asked where lay the harm of such a traditional custom, if the meat had first been bought from a butcher's shop, the Shaikh replied that the butcher would have to kill again in order to replace the meat which was sold.[1]

Personally hating notoriety of any kind, Shaikh Hamidu'd-Din asserted that sufis who sought fame in their own lifetime were soon forgotten. Those, however, who withdrew from worldly adulation achieved a long-lasting fame in death.[2] One's spiritual achievements and miraculous powers were also to be preserved from the gaze of the ordinary man. The Shaikh once surprised a disciple who visited him in order to discover the secret of his supernatural powers. Miracles were to be compared, said the Shaikh, with what he called the 'menstrual discharge of men'. As women maintained a veil of secrecy around their own menstrual flow, so should sufis hide from the public view their own supernatural powers.[3]

In order to ascertain the attitude of the Suhrawardi order towards wealth, Shaikh Hamidu'd-Din wrote a number of letters to Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya of the Suhrawardi *silsila* in Multan. Although the latter replied, Shaikh Hamidu'd-Din was not completely satisfied with the answers received. Both met in Delhi during the *mahzar*[4] to resolve the charges against Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din Tabrizi.[5] Shaikh Hamid reopened the question. The *Sururu's-Sudur* gives the conversation as follows:

> 'Shaikh Hamidu'd-Din: "Master, what is the reason why the serpents live on treasure? It is well known that the treasure, the serpent, the rose and the thorn are associated with each other. As treasure and serpent are associated in form, they should be linked in reality." Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din: "In form there is not much association between them, but in reality both are associated with each other. Both serpent and wealth are deadly poison and kill men." Hamidu'd-Din: "Then wealth is a serpent and one who stored wealth in fact rears a serpent."[6] Baha'u'd-Din: "Although wealth is a serpent, someone who has learnt the incantation to overcome the venom,

[1] *Sururu's-Sudur*, p. 221.
[2] *FF*, pp. 4-5.
[3] *Sururu's-Sudur*, p. 225.
[4] An assembly of 'ulama' and sufis to decide an important dispute; literally the word means either a royal court or any document attested by witnesses.
[5] *See* pp. 199-200, *infra*.
[6] This remark was made in reference to Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din, himself extremely rich.

> need not have any fear from the serpent." Hamidu'd-Din: "What is the logic behind rearing a dangerous and venomous animal and then depending upon incantations." Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din was speechless and mystically prompted by the teachings of his *pir*, who also had vast wealth, replied with the following argument. Baha'u'd-Din: "Your achievement as a dervish is not endowed by such beauty and elegance as to be immune from the evil eye, but our achievements as dervishes are endowed with such great beauty as to gain no harm even if the whole of the world's blackness were applied to its face." 'Shaikh Hamidu'd-Din retorted that the Suhrawardis' achievements as dervishes were not higher than those of the Prophet Muhammad, who had often remarked that his poverty was his pride. Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya Suhrawardi was unable to reply.'[1]

Controversy over the acquisition of material wealth by members of the Suhrawardi order annoyed one of Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din's sons, who visited Ajmer. Discovering that Shaikh Hamidu'd-Din did not attend Friday congregational prayers, he used this as a pretext to attack the Shaikh and gained some support from a group of 'ulama' who demanded that the Shaikh fulfil his religious duties. The Shaikh replied he was indeed performing his duties, for the law specified that attendance at Friday prayers was not compulsory as Nagaur was a village and not a town.[2]

Shaikh Hamidu'd-Din's learning and command of Islamic law was vast. In his youth he attended many sermons given by eminent 'ulama' and he committed them perfectly to memory. Believing that ignorance was the greatest curse of man, to him human beings without knowledge were no better than fossils.[3] The Shaikh asserted that one who knew the law and acted contrary to it committed one sin, but a person who did not know the law and acted incorrectly was guilty of two. Idleness was impiety (*kafiri*), and one should never be inactive for even a moment.[4]

According to the Shaikh, *Shari'a* and *Tariqa* were related in the same way as the body and the soul. The faith of the ignorant amounted to having fled from sin and performing obedience; the middle path consisted in abandoning the world and finding solace in thoughts of the rewards in an after-life; but the most superior kind of faith was held only by those who closely followed the life of the Prophet. This consisted in severing all relations from everything which was not God, and in the pursuit of God alone. However, these distinctions did not mean that there were various kinds of faiths. Faith was one entity and the differences consisted only between various kinds of men, rather than a dis-

[1] *Sururu's-Sudur*, pp. 86-7.
[2] ibid, p. 124.
[3] ibid, pp. 229-30.
[4] ibid, p. 236.

parity of faith itself. These three types were the result of three different insights into the phenomenal existence, but in reality: 'whichever way you turn there is the Face of God.'[1] The meaning of this verse is that man should abandon all thoughts of worldly gain in a pursuit of the Unseen. He should relinquish lust and remain with God. Wherever he goes he should turn his face to Him, whatever he speaks should be said to Him and whatever he seeks should be sought through God. He is not far from any man, rather he is far from God. Self-effacement in Him opens the doors. No one else can open the doors, they are opened only by an individual who is led to the goal through divine grace.[2] Heaven and hell are nothing but one's own actions, and good actions have pleasant consequences. *Faqirs* keep the grace given them hidden, they have no power to face heaven, let alone hell.[3] The vision of worldly beings is disturbed. Only those fully occupied with the Unseen have peace within themselves. Seekers after God are left with no will of their own. The *futuwwa* (the qualities of the chivalrous) is like a tree growing in a garden of friendship—its fruits are given or taken away without any feeling of sense of honour. The fruit of *muruwwa* (the counterpart of *futuwwa*) involves the idea of total giving and receiving and an annihilation of all worldly concerns.[4]

Shaikh Hamidu'd-Din died on 29 Rabi' II 673/1 November 1274 and was buried at Nagaur.[5] Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq erected a tomb over his remains, which was completed on 15 Sah'ban 730/3 June 1330.[6] Other constructions, including a gateway, were built by Shaikh Husain Nagauri.[7] Shaikh Hamidu'd-Din was succeeded by his grandson, Shaikh Faridu'd-Din Mahmud, as the Shaikh's own son, 'Azizu'd-Din, had died during his father's lifetime. Muhammad bin Tughluq liberally bestowed endowments on the Shaikh's family and gave Shaikh Faridu'd-Din an honoured place in his court. Other descendants of Shaikh Hamid obtained important administrative posts, mainly in the Nagaur region. Shaikh Farid's correspondence indicates that the Sultan also gave generous gifts to holy men, Saiyids and members of other Muslim religious groups. Sometime after 1327–28 the Sultan married his daughter, Bibi Rasti, to Shaikh Faridu'd-Din's grandson, Shaikh Fathu'llah bin Shaikh Auhadu'd-Din, after he himself had suggested it in a letter to Shaikh Farid. Fathu'llah was unable to adjust to court life and he and

[1] *AA*, p. 34; the quotation is from the Qur'an, Chapter II, verse 115.
[2] *AA*, p. 35.
[3] *AA*, p. 36.
[4] *SA*, p. 160.
[5] Biographical references in *Sururu's-Sudur* are copious, cf. 161, 218, 219, 221, 222, 227, 229, 231, 301. For biographical notes *see SA*, pp. 136-64; Jamali, pp. 13-14; *AA*, pp. 29-44; *A'in*, p. 171; *Gulzar-i Abrar*, ff. 36a-b; *Mir'atu'l-Asrar*, ff. 256b-258b; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, f. 56a.
[6] *Sururu's-Sudur*, p. 125.
[7] *AA*, pp. 183-84.

his wife were allowed to settle at Deh, not far from Nagaur.[1]

Most of the credit for the re-establishment of Nagaur as a strong centre of sufism goes in reality to Khwaja Husain Nagauri, a descendant of Shaikh Hamid, and a disciple of one of Shaikh Farid's sons, Shaikh Kabir.

Khwaja Husain Nagauri lived like the local cultivators, driving a bullock cart and caring for his animals himself. He lived both at Ajmer and Nagaur and the money he received from Sultan Ghiyasu'd-Din Khalji (1469–1501) was spent in constructing the tomb of Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din and the gateway of Shaikh Hamudu'd-Din's tomb. At Nagaur he devoted himself to the religious and spiritual education of others. He wrote a detailed commentary on the Qur'an, entitled the *Nuru'n-Nabi* and also compiled treatises on sufism. A significant contribution was his biography of Ahmad bin Muhammad al-Ghazali.[2]

The rise of the Rajput powers in Marwar and Mewar in the sixteenth century failed to undermine the importance of Nagaur as a sufi centre. As well as the Chishti *silsila*, the town attracted other sufis and it was this galaxy of saints and scholars that prompted Shaikh Khizr, the father of Shaikh Mubarak and the grandfather of Shaikh Abu'l-Fazl, to settle there.

Khwaja Ziya' Nakhshabi

Among the disciples of Shaikh Farid, the most notable was Khwaja Ziya' Nakhshabi. Virtually nothing is known of his ancestors, but it appears they were from Nakhshab in the Sughd province and had migrated to Nagaur during the Mongol invasion of that area.[3] Khwaja Ziya'u'd-Din's fame is based on his scholarship and mastery of the didactic and on his sufi poetry which was often interspersed in his prose. A born raconteur, his works in Persian describe many well-known sufi teachings, but it was his charming style which made them memorable.

The *Silku's-Suluk* (String of Sufism) of Ziya'u'd-Din Nakhshabi describes the basic principles of the movement in 151 short chapters. The writer considered that only a knowledge of the *Tawhid* and the *Shari'a* excelled a general understanding of sufism. To him the intellect and love were diametrically opposed. The 'ulama' were masters of the intellect and *faqirs* were people of love, and both these elements dominated each other. Only prophets could dominate both of them,[4] as human beings were the weakest of all creatures.[5]

Prayers should be made prior to the occurrence of a calamity, wrote

[1]*Sururu's-Sudur*, cf. pp. 125, 127-28, 136-39, 146-47, 149, 150-52, 155, 160-69, 171-73, 272; *AA*, p. 74.

[2]*AA*, pp. 182-84.

[3]*AA*, p. 105.

[4]*Silku's-Suluk*, MS. Ethé, 1839, cf. 23a.

[5]ibid, f. 26b.

Ziya'u'd-Din. There was a story that the king of Nishapur sent a message to a dervish to beg him to avert a Mongol invasion. The dervish replied that it was already too late and only a surrender to the divine will was advisable at that stage.[1] Moreover, according to the *Silku's-Suluk*, the virtuous only spoke when it was imperative to do so, and there were many people who for years had spoken only words from the Qur'an.[2]

In one chapter of the work, Ziya'u'd-Din stated that men were divided into four categories. Firstly, there were the ostensibly pious, who were inwardly unworthy; these were the worldly. Then there were people who were inwardly brilliant, but externally bad. They were *majzubs*. Thirdly, there were those whose inward condition was as evil as the outward one. They were the common people. Fourthly, there were people who were excellent both inwardly and outwardly. They were the sufis.[3]

Explaining that the world was a prison, Shaikh Ziya'u'd-Din related the following story. A man who was attached to the pleasures of this world asked for water at the house of a dervish and was given warm, bitter water. Upon complaining, the thirsty man was told by the dervish that human beings were prisoners and that they therefore never drank good water.[4]

Ziya'u'd-Din Nakhshabi advised the 'ulama' to imitate sufis in the path of renunciation. He also urged the latter to heed the 'ulama' on religious matters. *'Alims* should adopt the customs of dervishes and they in turn should imitate the intellectual dedication of scholars. Without some of the qualities of a dervish an *'alim* was like an animal and a dervish without some of the virtues acquired from learning was ineffectual in his own spiritual journey.[5]

Among Nakhshabi's other works, *'Ashra-i Mubasshshara* and *Kulliyyat-wa Juziyyat* are of interest, but he is mainly remembered for his work the *Tuti Nama* (Stories from a Parrot). This is the Persian version of the Sanskrit work entitled *Suka-Saptati* by Chintamani Bhatta. The original contains seventy stories which a parrot told his mistress on seventy successive nights in order to prevent her, in the absence of her husband, from meeting a lover. The tales are largely derived from the *Panchtantra* and *Hitupdesha*. The *Suka-Saptati* was so popular that, in the thirteenth century, it was translated into Persian, but this version was tediously long and inelegant in style. The original seventy stories in Nakhshabi's version were reduced to fifty-two and the new work contained a large number of Hindi words. Nakhshabi arranged it in a more elegant style and substituted some new stories for the old. Moreover, Nakhshabi

[1] *Silku's-Suluk*, MS, Ethé, 1839, f. 17a. The story is generally ascribed to Shaikh Faridu'd-Din 'Attar.

[2] ibid, f. 55a.

[3] ibid, f. 18b.

[4] ibid, f. 56b.

[5] ibid, f. 104b.

dubbed the characters with Arabic names, adding a Persian background and changed the ending. In the Sanskrit work, the husband returns home at the end of the seventy nights, and after admitting her planned adultery, the wife is reconciled to him. The parrot admits he was Gandharb,[1] and obtains his release, returning to the court of Raja Indra. In Nakhshabi's work, however, the parrot detains the heroine for fifty-two nights, and reveals her evil intentions on the husband's return. The latter kills his wife and frees the parrot. The husband then embraces sufism.

It is difficult to assess how far Nakhshabi drew on the original Sanskrit, but it is apparent that he must have understood the language. The work he wrote on sex and coition, containing a classification of female physical types, is based on the *Rati Rahasya* (Mysteries of Passion) by Kokapandita or Kukkoka who flourished in the eleventh or twelfth centuries. Nakhshabi called it the *Lazzatu'n-Nisa'* (Sex Enjoyments). The work shows a deep influence of the Hindu view of desire and love or *Kama*, which involved a belief in education rather than inhibition in sex.

To Shaikh Nakhshabi, Islam was a religion which both offered and incorporated a middle path. In his *Tuti Nama* he ended his preface with the poem:

> 'Oh Nakhshabi! Adopt the religion of those who follow a middle course.
>
> The Prophet himself has ordained to do so.
> The middle of the road policy is praiseworthy.
> The commandment of Islam is moderation.'

Nakhshabi died in 751/1350–51,[2] but his poetry and his major work, the *Tuti Nama*, have helped to perpetuate much of the fame he achieved during his life.

Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki

Ajmer and Nagaur undoubtedly remained important Chishti centres. But at the beginning of the thirteenth century, due to Mongol invasions in Central Asia and Iran, Delhi became the heart of the sufi movement. Sultan Shamsu'd-Din Iltutmish (1210–35) moved his capital to Delhi, and the Indian empire of the Delhi Sultans became the only peaceful region in the Islamic east.

Ghazni and the Afghan areas of the Ghurid empire were first seized by the Khwarazm-Shahs of modern Khiva in the U.S.S.R. and then by the Mongols, or Chingizids, who razed to the ground a large number of Central Asian and Iranian towns. Chingiz Khan himself pursued Jalalu'd-Din Mingburnu, the last Khwarazmian, overtaking him on the

[1] A demigod.
[2] *AA*, pp. 105-09.

bank of the Indus. Although Jalalu'd-Din offered stubborn resistance, he suffered a crushing defeat in November 1221. After the battle, Chingiz Khan marched back towards the west, and his absence enabled Iltutmish to consolidate power in the Panjab, seven years later routing from Sind his rival, Nasiru'd-Din Qubacha. The exodus of scholars and holy men from Central Asia and Iran after the fall of the Muslim powers to the Mongol barbarians, made Delhi the strongest eastern Islamic capital, the city medieval scholars loved to call the Qubbatu'l Islam (Cupola of Islam).

For Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki, the leader of the Chishti sufis in Delhi, it was a Herculean task to firmly establish the order there. Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki was born at Ush, in the province of the Jaxartes. During the tenth century, the area had become politically and commercially very important. It had also developed into a strong centre for sufis of the school of al-Hallaj. When he was eighteen months old, Kamalu'd-Din Ahmad Musa, the Khwaja's father, died, and his mother became totally responsible for the child. Learning the Qur'an under Aba Hafs, he finally committed it to memory after he had settled in Delhi.[1]

As he grew older, the Khwaja became increasingly devoted to prayer and meditation. His mother organized a marriage for him, but finding his wife an obstacle to prayer, Qutbu'd-Din divorced her and left for Baghdad. There, in a mosque, he met Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Chishti. So impressed was Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar with the latter's personality that he became Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din's disciple, in spite of the fact that other eminent and pious sufis, including Shaikh 'Abdu'l Qadir Jilani and Shaikh Abu'n-Najib Suhrawardi also lived in Baghdad at that time.[2]

After the departure of Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din from Baghdad, Qutbu'd-

[1]Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Chiragh-i Dihli gives the following story of his first contact with Aba Hafs. According to him, Qutbu'd-Din requested that his mother entrust him to a teacher of the Qur'an. She gave some sweets to her slave girl and asked her to take the child to the Hafiz who lived close-by. On the way Qutbu'd-Din met an old man who took him to the mosque where Aba Hafs taught children. Aba Hafs warmly greeted the old man and kissed his feet. The latter entrusted the child to Aba Hafs and departed. Aba Hafs then told Qutbu'd-Din that the old man was Khwaja Khizr. *KM*, pp. 107-08. Jamali describes the story differently and writes that when Qutbu'd-Din was five, his mother asked one of her neighbours to take the boy to a teacher. Khwaja Khizr met the neighbour on the way to school and offered to take the boy himself. Jamali, pp. 17-8. Some type of intervention by Khwaja Khizr in sufi stories is quite common and is included to add a pious flavour.

[2]Jamali, p. 17. In an earlier statement Jamali says that Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din initiated Khwaja Bakhtiyar into his discipleship at Ush p. 18. This has led to considerable confusion in later works. According to the *Siyaru'l-Auliya'*, Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din met Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din in the mosque of Imam Abu'l-Lais Samarqandi, *see* p. 48. Abu'l-Fazl relates that Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din initiated Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din into his discipleship at the age of eighteen. Qutbu'd-Din then visited Baghdad where he was instructed. Filled with a great desire to meet Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din, he left for India, *see A'in*, p. 169. According to Firishta, Qutbu'd-Din became Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din's disciple in Isfahan. *Gulshan-i Ibrahimi*, p. 378. This statement is based on Jamali's account of Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din's visit to Isfahan, *see* Jamali, p. 7.

Din also left and travelled through Khurasan to reach Multan. There he established a friendship with Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya. At the same time the Mongols invaded Multan. Nasiru'd-Din, Qubacha of Multan, requested Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din for help against the enemy. Giving him an arrow, the Khwaja suggested he shoot it blindly into the enemy's camp. Qubacha obeyed, and the following day the Mongols retreated. Although, in reality, the Mongols left the Indus region for political reasons, this further increased Qubacha's devotion to the Khwaja. Although he urged Qutbu'd-Din to remain in Multan, the Khwaja went to Delhi[1] sometime after 1221.

Shamsu'd-Din Iltutmish warmly welcomed Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din to Delhi, hoping he would live inside the town. The Khwaja, however, preferred to stay in Kilukhari, near the Jumna, but after a period he agreed to the Sultan's request. Twice weekly he was visited by the eminent people of Delhi. The Khwaja wrote to Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din requesting permission to visit him at Ajmer but Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din, believing he should continue his work there, ordered him to remain in Delhi.

The Khwaja's task in Delhi was made extremely arduous as it involved making the Chishti order respectable amongst the most eminent and prestigious Muslim divines of the Islamic world, many of whom had collected there.

About the same time Shaikh Muhammad 'Ata, called Qazi Hamud'd-Din Nagauri, who had known the Khwaja at Baghdad, settled in Delhi. The Qazi, although a Suhrawardi was deeply interested in the practice of *sama'* as a source for inducing a mystical state of ecstasy. Unwavering in their opposition to *sama'*, the 'ulama' were over-ruled by Iltutmish[2]

[1] *FF*, pp. 121-22.

[2] Mystic literature gives an exaggerated account of the interest of Iltutmish in sufism. He was born in the Ilbari tribe of Turkistan and sold as a slave by his brothers when only a child. He was then bought by a kinsman of the Sadr-i Jahan of Bukhara. A dervish there prophesied he would become a king and according to Minhaj Siraj, Iltutmish owed his throne to the blessings of that dervish. Accordingly he showed great respect to sufis and *'alims*. The Sadr-i Jahan's family also sold him, and after having been sold once more he was brought to Ghazna. The dealer asked a large price and Sultan Mu'izzu'd-Din Sam prohibited the sale. The dealer went back to Ghazna with Iltutmish and returned to Bukhara three years later. Sultan Qutbu'd-Din Aibak, also a former slave, during a visit to Ghazna after his Anhilwara expedition in 1196, took a fancy to Iltutmish and was able to buy him in Delhi, and between 1197 or 1198 to 1206 Iltutmish rose to prominence. *Tabaqat-i Nasiri*, Calcutta, 1863-64, pp. 165-69. *Fawa'idu'l-Fu'ad* relates that Iltutmish lived with Shaikh Auhadu'd-Din Kirmani and Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi at Baghdad and that one of them prophesied he would become king. *FF*, 225. 'Isami says that the prophesy was made by the Baghdad sufis for the services of Iltutmish as a slave boy at a *sama'* in Baghdad. 'Isami, 119. Both stories are myths because the better slave market was at Ghazna not Baghdad. Nizami, who gives credence to the two stories, says that: 'After a short stay at Bukhara, Iltutmish somehow reached Baghdad.' K.A. Nizami, Religious life and learnings of Iltutmish in *Studies in medieval Indian history and culture*, Allahabad, 1966, p. 16. Nizami's attempt to prove that Iltutmish's rise to the throne was due to the influence of Baghdad mystics precludes him from re-examining other historical possibilities.

who supported the sufis, using them as a counter to the former.

The Sultan offered the post of *Shaikhu'l-Islam* to Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din, but after he refused it the office was conferred on Najmu'd-Din Sughra. For a period relations between Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar and Najmu'd-Din were cordial. Gradually, however, the Shaikh became jealous of the Khwaja and used the latter's practice of gaining spiritual ecstasy through *sama'* as a pretext to incite the 'ulama' against him. Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din was prompted to visit Delhi to investigate the confrontation between the Khwaja and the Shaikh. Najmu'd-Din Sughra refused to call, as was traditional, on Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din. Visiting the latter, the Khwaja upbraided him for his rudeness. The former apologized, admitting that he was concerned at the people's devotion to Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din. Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din promised that the Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din would accompany him to Ajmer. But Iltutmish and the people of Delhi were so upset at the Khwaja's departure that he was followed, and the dust on the road where he had passed was collected as a relic. Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din was so moved at such a spontaneous and genuine sign of affection for his disciple that he urged him to return.[1]

A traditional story which presents the sanctity and supernatural powers of Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar involved a tank which was built to overcome Delhi's water shortage. Sultan Iltutmish devised a scheme for it, but was unsure where to choose the site. According to tradition, the Prophet Muhammad appeared to both the Sultan and the Khwaja, indicating a particular spot. Hauzi-i-Shamsi was excavated, and the area became significant, not only as a source of water, but more importantly, as a cultural and religious centre, where the spiritual and intellectual élite of Delhi would gather.[2]

Another story regarding the Khwaja's supernatural powers is as follows. A poet named, Nasiri from Transoxiana, begged the Khwaja to pray for the success of his poetry at the Sultan's court. The Khwaja prophesied his good fortune in this regard. At court a recitation of the first verse failed to capture the Sultan's attention, but the poet mentally invoked the power of the Khwaja. At that point, the Sultan began to listen with rapt attention and afterwards rewarded him with thirty-five thousand *tankas*. In gratitude, the poet requested the Khwaja to take half for the poor, but the Khwaja refused to accept payment.[3]

The Khwaja continually advised his disciples to assist people who were needy without heeding the result. An eminent disciple, Shaikh Faridu'd-Din or Baba Farid, sought his advice regarding the writing of amulets for which people were constantly asking. The Khwaja replied that the fulfilment of desires belonged to no-one; the amulets contained God's

[1] *SA*, pp. 54-5.
[2] Jamali, pp. 26-7; Amir Khusraw, *Qiranu's-Sa'dain*, Aligarh, 1918, pp. 30-5.
[3] *FF*, p. 226; Jamali, pp. 28-9.

name and His words, and could be given to the people.[1]

As he devoted himself entirely to fasting and praying, in true ascetic fashion Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din and his family lived in highly impoverished circumstances. Two versions explaining the addition to his name of the word *Kaki* or Man of Bread, exist and serve to depict the way in which he lived. According to Amir Khwurd, the Khwaja would on occasions borrow up to thirty *dirhams* (copper coins) from a neighbouring Muslim grocer for household expenses, repaying the money as soon as some *futuh* was received. Later he decided to give up borrowing to suffice his family's needs and a piece of bread would miraculously appear under his prayer carpet. The grocer asked his spouse to discover from the Khwaja's wife why they no longer borrowed. The wife revealed the secret of the bread's appearance and it never appeared again.[2]

The second story comes from Jamali. According to him the Khwaja's family totalled nine. His wife occasionally borrowed some money from a neighbour, a Muslim grocer, in order to feed her starving family. On one occasion the grocer's wife taunted the Khwaja's wife that without their loan the family would have starved to death. The latter related the conversation to her husband who, after meditation, asked his wife to refrain from borrowing. He pointed to a niche in his cell and told his wife to go there and recite *B'ismillah* and she would get as much bread as she needed. So the Khwaja became known as 'Kaki' as he lived on miraculously received breads alone.[3]

Two sons were born to Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar. One survived after his death, but the other died when he was seven years old. The Khwaja's wife was deeply upset and her cries disturbed the Khwaja's meditation. When he was told of the death of his son, his wife's sorrow moved him. Had he known of the illness he would have prayed for the child, he said. The story depicts the complete other-worldliness of the Khwaja as he was totally unaware of his son's illness or death.[4]

The death of the Khwaja is a story of great significance to sufis. He took part in a *sama'* ritual in the khanqah of Shaikh 'Ali Sijzi. When the musician recited the following verse, written by the celebrated sufi, Shaikh Ahmad of Jam,[5] the Khwaja was seized with ecstasy:

> 'The martyrs of the dagger of *taslim* (surrender)
> Each moment get a new life from the Unseen World.'[6]

[1] *FF*, p. 213. [2] *SA*, pp. 48-9. [3] Jamali, pp. 24-5.

[4] *FF*, p. 72; *SA*, pp. 23-4.

[5] Shaikh Ahmad of Jam, known as Zinda Pil (Elephant Colossus) came from Jam, now an insignificant village above Chisht. In the eleventh century it was an important place where Sultan Ghiyasu'd-Din Muhammad built his famous minaret, the proto-type of the famous Qutb Minar in Delhi. Shaikh Ahmad of Jam enjoyed great fame, both as a poet and sufi. He died in Muharram 536/August, 1141.

[6] *FF*, pp. 159-60.

Taken to his house, the Khwaja ordered the verse to be repeated each time he regained consciousness, which always occurred at the time of obligatory prayers. He then lapsed back into an ecstatic state. On the fifth night, 14 Rabi' I 633/27 November 1235, he died and was buried in Mahrauli about eleven miles from Delhi, at a place he himself had chosen.[1]

Shaikh Badru'd-Din

During his lifetime, Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din trained nine disciples, only two of which are well-known. His successor in Delhi was Shaikh Badru'd-Din, who came from Ghazna. From there he received news of the death of his family during the Mongol invasion.[2]

The Shaikh became the Khwaja's disciple, but it was his skill as a poet and orator that made him famous. All the eminent 'ulama' and sufis were attracted to his sermons. After the death of Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din, Shaikh Badru'd-Din became involved in Delhi's political life, although in general, Chishti sufis refrained from such activity. He became a close associate of Nizamu'd-Din Kharitadar (The Treasurer) who built a khanqah for the Shaikh. Shortly afterwards Nizamu'd-Din was charged with embezzlement and lost his position. His loss of power tended to undermine the prestige of the Shaikh who wrote to Baba Farid in Ajodhan asking for his assistance. The latter replied that such misfortunes befell one who violated the traditions of his preceptors and that no other Chishti sufi had lived in a khanqah built for his own personal use.[3] However, Shaikh Badru'd-Din managed to survive his association with an official who had been found guilty of such a grave misdemeanour.

A great enthusiast for *sama'* rituals, at a ripe old age Shaikh Badru'd-Din still danced like a boy of ten. He died in about 657/1258–59 and was buried near the tomb of his master, Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki.[4] Shaikh Badru'd-Din's political associations retarded the growth of the Chishti tradition in Delhi. The image of that order, however, was perfected in distant Ajodhan by another of Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din's *khalifas*, Shaikh Faridu'd-Din Ganj-i Shakar, popularly called Baba Farid.

Baba Farid

Shaikh Faridu'd-Din's ancestors came from Kabul, but migrated to the Panjab in the middle of the twelfth century. The orgy of Ghazna's

[1]For biographical notes on Shaikh Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki *see SA*, pp. 54-7; Jamali, pp. 16-31; *AA*, pp. 25-6, *A'in*, p. 169; *Gulshan-i Ibrahimi*, pp. 378-83, *Gulzar-i Abrar*, ff. 21b-24b; *Miratu'l-Asrar*, ff. 258b-64b; *Kalimat*, pp. 7-18; and *Ma'riju'l-Wilayat*, ff. 12a-21a.

[2]*FF*, p. 85. [3]*FF*, p. 91.

[4]*AA*, pp. 50-1. For biographical notes on the Shaikh *see*, *SA*, pp. 164-66; Jamali, pp. 50-1; *Miratu'l-Asrar*, pp. ff. 290a-91a; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, pp. ff. 82b-84a; and *Kalimat*, pp. 45-8.

destruction by 'Ala'u'd-Din Husain of Ghur in 1150–51, followed by the Ghuzz invasion six years later, drove a large number of people from that region to the Panjab for safety. Baba Farid's father, Qazi Shu'aib, went to Lahore and later moved to Qasur, south-east of Lahore. The Ghaznawid Sultan of the Panjab made him the Qazi of Kahtwal, a town in Multan, between Maharan and Ajodhan. There Qazi Shu'aib married and had three sons, 'Izzu'd-Din Mahmud, Faridu'd-Din and Najibu'd-Din. Shaikh Farid was born in 569/1173–74 or 571/1175–76. The Shaikh's father was a scholar, but it was his mother, an exceedingly pious woman, who prayed nightly at lengthy vigils, who exerted the greater influence on the future sufi saint. One story regarding the spiritual power of Baba Farid's mother related that a thief, entering the house glanced at the praying woman and was instantly blinded. The robber implored the Shaikh's mother to restore his eyesight. She did so, and the blindness was removed. The following day, the thief returned with his family to the Shaikh's house and was converted to Islam.[1]

His mother's influence helped to promote an extreme asceticism in Shaikh Farid. Unconcerned with food or clothing, he was constantly occupied with meditation in a place behind the mosque at Kahtwal. The townsfolk came to believe he was deranged, and they spoke so to Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din Tabrizi[2] of Baba Farid and what to them were his strange habits.

At the age of eighteen, Baba Farid settled in Multan to undertake further studies and joined a seminary at the mosque of Maulana Minhaju'd-Din Tirmizi. There he met Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki and asked to become his disciple. According to Jamali, Baba Farid was initiated by the Khwaja at Multan and was advised to complete his education there. Shortly afterwards the Khawaja left for Delhi. Jamali adds that the Baba then visited Qandahar to acquire further knowledge, but it is more likely that Baba Farid reached Delhi shortly after the Khwaja's arrival and was initiated into the distinguished group of sufis residing in the Khwaja's *jama'at-khana*.

Baba Farid lived in a small cell near the *jama'at-khana* and, under guidance, performed severe ascetic exercises. His austerities so impressed Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din during his visit to Delhi, that he took a special interest in Baba Farid, prophesied his later fame and asked Khwaja

[1]*FF*, p. 136.

[2]*KM*, pp. 219-20; When Jalalu'd-Din Tabrizi went to see Baba Farid he had only torn clothing to wear so he had great difficulty in presenting himself respectably to his distinguished visitor. Jalalu'd-Din had with him a pomegranate, and broke it, offering it to Baba Farid. As the Baba was fasting he refused to eat it, but after his guest had left he picked up a seed and in the evening ate that. Instantly his heart was illuminated and he lamented not having eaten the whole fruit. However in Delhi Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din consoled the Baba saying that in each pomegranate there was only one seed endowed with spiritual blessings and that he had had it.

Qutbu'd-Din to join him in prayer for his disciple's future greatness.[1]

The severities practiced by the Baba in his Delhi cell failed to satisfy him and he asked his master if he could perform a *chilla* which involved spiritual exercises and fasting for forty days. The Khwaja finally permitted him to perform a *chilla-i ma'kus* (inverted *chilla*). Ignorant of the details he asked Badru'd-Din Ghaznawi to obtain them from the Khwaja who replied that it required a man to tie a rope around his feet and remain suspended in a well, head down, for forty days and nights, while both fasting and praying. The Baba found a lonely mosque in Uch and, taking the *mu'azzin*[2] into his confidence performed the *chilla-i ma'kus*.[3]

The reason why the Shaikh came to be known as *Ganj-i Shakar* (Store of Sugar) is described in different stories in various hagiological works. A more popular version is that, overpowered by incessant fasting for three days, the Baba placed some pebbles in his mouth. These immediately changed into sugar. Baba Farid, believing that this had been the work of the devil, spat them out. At midnight, again overcome by hunger, he repeated his actions, the stones became sugar and he refused to eat them. Finally, overpowered by extreme hunger he ate some pebbles which had become sugar so that he could continue praying. Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din approved his action, telling him that whatever was received from the unseen world must necessarily be good.[4]

After the Baba's fame in Delhi became an obstacle to prayer and meditation, he left for Hansi in the Hisar district. He was therefore absent from Delhi at the time of the Khwaja's death, arriving five days after the event. In accordance with the Khwaja's will, Qazi Hamidu'd-Din Nagauri gave Baba Farid relics from the Khwaja, including his *khirqa*, turban, stick and wooden sandals. Although this implied that the Baba was the Khwaja's successor in Delhi, the Baba's asceticism and total withdrawal from the world precluded any conflict with Shaikh Badru'd-Din who had also been extremely close to the Khwaja and who wished to be his spiritual successor in Delhi.

First going to Hansi, the Baba finally settled at Ajodhan, where he remained from about 1236 until his death on 5 Muharram 664/17 October 1265. His long stay on the Satlaj, along one of the main routes from Multan to Lahore and Delhi, was a spiritually rewarding experience. Although he selected a lonely place to reside, Baba Farid was harassed by local officers of the Qazi of Ajodhan and by the rudeness of the people of the town. This was prompted mainly by the Qazi's hostility towards the sufi movement. On one occasion the Qazi requested the 'ulama' of

[1]Jamali, p. 23.

[2]One who calls the *azan*—the signal which summons the faithful to prayer.

[3]Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar's reluctance to permit *chilla-i ma'kus* sprang from the fact that such devotional exercises gave the devotee unnecessary publicity. *FF*, p. 29; *SA*, pp. 68-9.

[4]*SA*, pp. 67-8.

Multan to issue a *fatwa* (legal decree) against anyone who lived in a mosque, was known as a dervish, listened to music or danced. The 'ulama' refused to comply, after discovering that such a *fatwa* would be used against the Baba.[1] Nevertheless, official oppression continued, and an attempt was made on his life by a qalandar.[2] At a later date, the Shaikh became convinced that a Muslim magician was employing witchcraft to kill him.[3] The Baba did not, therefore, select Ajodhan in order to reform or convert 'backward Hindu tribes', as Nizami seeks to show,[4] for it would appear that there was a great deal of work to be done among the Muslims of Ajodhan. Rather, through an example of sanctity and austerity, Baba Farid sought to reform the Muslims in the area of north-west India.

Shaikh Faridu'd-Din lived near the Jami' mosque, in a small house of mud walls covered with a thatched roof. He had strictly forbidden the use of burnt bricks for the building[5] which, according to Chishti tradition, were not simple enough for an ascetic's dwelling. The door remained open until midnight as a welcome to visitors.[6] Among his few possessions, the Baba had a small rug which he used by night as a blanket, but which hardly covered him. During the day it was used as a sitting rug. Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din's stick rested behind his head as a pillow.[7] His food consisted of wild fruit and millet bread. Abstaining from nourishment during the day, in the evening he broke his fast by taking sherbet. A bowl of it would be brought to the Baba and often mixed with dried grapes. Of this he drank never more than half, dividing the rest among his visitors. After prayers, two pieces of bread smeared with *ghee* were taken to Baba Farid. One was given away, the other he himself ate, sharing it with his favourite disciples.[8]

The *jama'at-khana* consisted only of a thatched hall, used for communal living and a separate cell was for the Shaikh's meditation.

The *jama'at-khana* contained not a single piece of furniture, every member sat and slept on the floor. On special occasions a bed was provided for a new visitor.[9] The Shaikh, followed the same practices as his disciples. Once when ill and forced to rest on the bed he apologized profusely to those sitting on the floor.[10]

The establishment was run by Baba's chief disciples. Fuel and wild

[1] *FF*, p. 109; Jamali, p. 43.
[2] *FF*, p. 168; Jamali, p. 35.
[3] *FF*, pp. 191-92.
[4] K.A. Nizami, *The life and times of Shaikh Farid-u'd-Din Ganj-i-Shakar*, Aligarh, 1955, p. 36.
[5] *SA*, p. 90.
[6] *FF*, pp. 85-6.
[7] *FF*, p. 60.
[8] *FF*, pp. 59-60.
[9] *SA*, p. 107.
[10] *FF*, p. 263.

berries, which were then boiled, were collected from the forests.[1] In the early years of his stay at Ajodhan a *zanbil* (a basket made of palm leaves hung round the neck) was carried by some members of the *jama'at-khana* twice a day to the town and the offerings placed in it were shared by everyone. The Baba also preferred to eat bread from the *zanbil*,[2] perhaps to be more fully integrated into the life of all members of his *jama'at-khana*. Other Chishti Shaikhs, including his own teachers, had permitted the borrowing of small amounts of money for household needs, but the Baba strictly forbade this practice.[3] Anything received as *futuh* if not used immediately was kept no longer than a day and was distributed to the needy. To a sufi a new day ushered in new hope in God, and a concern for future needs was seen as totally opposed to a complete trust in Him.

The *jama'at-khana*, situated on a main route, attracted many visitors. These included scholars, merchants, government servants, artisans, sufis and qalandars, in short, men from all classes and sections of Indian society. Some, disillusioned with a life of affluence and comfort, became permanent members, others stayed for short periods to seek the Baba's blessing and experience a spiritual rejuvenation. Some of his eminent disciples who lived in other areas also visited the *jama'at-khana*, but one such visitor, Maulana Badru'd-Din Ishaq, stayed and became a steward of the *jama'at-khana*. As well as prestigious guests, many people who came to the Shaikh were humble. A large number requested *ta'wiz* (amulets) and the demand for amulets became so great that it was physically impossible for the Baba to fulfil all requests, so often they would be written instead by Maulana Ishaq.[4]

The *jama'at-khana* received visitors who were often less than polite and considerate to its inmates. On one occasion while the Baba was deeply engrossed in meditation in his cell a qalandar called. The Shaikh's prayer carpet was lying in front of his door. Although the qalandar sat on the carpet, Shaikh Badru'd-Din restrained himself from protesting. Preparing some food, he offered it to the qalandar who refused to eat before he had seen Baba Farid. On the disciple's insistence, the qalandar ate the meal and then prepared some grass, probably Indian hemp, by making a paste in his bowl. Some pieces fell on to the Shaikh's prayer carpet. Shaikh Badru'd-Din Ishaq tried to restrain him. The qalandar became so enraged that he raised his hand to strike Badru'd-Din. Emerging from the cell, the Baba begged the qalandar to excuse his disciple. Seeing that the qalandar was determined to strike the disciple, the Baba

[1]*FF*, pp. 85-6.
[2]*KM*, p. 150; *SA*, p. 66. *See* in Chapter One how Baba Sa'id Dust Dada, a disciple of Shaikh Abu Sa'id, collected food in a *zanbil*, p. 74, *supra*.
[3]*SA*, p. 66.
[4]*FF*, pp. 73, 213-14.

asked him to strike the wall instead. The qalandar complied and the wall fell down.[1]

Again a qalandar called and accused Baba Farid of making himself an idol. The Shaikh answered that God had made him what he was, to which the qalandar replied: 'No you have made yourself an idol.' The Shaikh answered: 'No everything has been made by God.' Ashamed, the qalandar departed.[2]

Discussions in the *jama'at-khana* were liberal and covered all aspects of sufism. Baba Farid also participated but he gave others the opportunity to express their own opinions freely.

Amongst the most interesting conversations recorded are probably those between the jogis or Nath yogi visitors to the *jama'at-khana*. Many years later these were recalled by Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' and retold to his disciples:

Wednesday, 23 *Muharram* 712/31 *May* 1312.

A yogi came and Shaikh Nizammu'd-Din Auliya' asked him the secret and real essence of his mystic path. The yogi answered: 'According to our doctrines the self of a man is composed of two regions, one is spiritual and the other is profane. From the crown of the head to the navel is the spiritual region, and from the navel to the foot is profane. The essence of the doctrine is that the spiritual region is all truth, purity and ethics. The profane region demands strenuous efforts for self control and morality.' This conversation greatly impressed Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din.[3]

In fact this argument is a Persian version of the regions of Shiva and Shakti in *Hatha-Yoga*. The region from the head to the navel is associated with Shiva, while that below the navel is connected with Shakti.

Another such conversation is recorded as follows:

Thursday, 5 *Ramazan* 720/9 *October* 1320.

The discussion centred around the influence of the company one keeps. Shaikh (Nizamu'd-Din Auliya') revealed that on one occasion a student went to Shaikh (Farid) in order to become his disciple but his interest in sufism was not genuine. He became the Shaikh's disciple, shaving his head. One day the student asked for some medicine from a yogi to grow long hair. Shaikh Nazamu'd-Din was disgusted as hair shaving was performed to cleanse one from pride and was therefore an essential part of sufi piety.[4]

Sunday, 11 *Zu'lhijja* 720/12 *January* 1321.

Those gathered at the *jama'at-khana* were discussing the reasons for the

[1] *KM*, pp. 130-31.
[2] *FF*, p. 56.
[3] *FF*, p. 97.
[4] *FF*, p. 250.

birth of children who later become completely non-spiritual. They agreed that the main reason for such a defect was that people did not know the right moment for sexual intercourse. A yogi present remarked that as each month had either twenty-nine or thirty days, each day had a peculiarity of its own. For example, intercourse on the first day of the month resulted in the birth of a son of a particular quality and intercourse on the second day resulted in the birth of a son with different qualities. After the yogi had enumerated the results of each day of the month, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din committed them to memory, and then repeated them. Baba Farid remarked that such knowledge was of little use to the Shaikh.[1] These three stories indicate the broad range of discussions held at the *jama'at-khana*.

Later Chishti records give an exaggerated account of the intimate relationship between Baba Farid and Sultan Balban (1266–87). The latter had enjoyed unlimited power as a regent under Sultan Nasiru'd-Din Mahmud (1246–66). He was then known as Ulugh Khan. According to the *Jawahar-i Faridi*, after his accession Balban married his daughter to the Shaikh,[2] but this is hardly historical as the Shaikh died before Ulugh Khan became Sultan Balban of the Delhi Sultanate. There would appear to be some validity in the fact that Ulugh Khan prevented Sultan Nasiru'd-Din from seeing Baba Farid in 650/1252–53 when the Sultan was marching towards Multan. Ulugh Khan himself visited Shaikh Farid and offered a *farman* of four villages to the Shaikh and a cash payment for dervishes. The Shaikh returned the *farman* but accepted the money for distribution among the dervishes. Ulugh Khan was too discreet to request the Shaikh to pray for his succession to the throne. Sultan Mahmud was very young and had offered offence neither to the sufis nor to the 'ulama.' Nevertheless, Ulugh Khan paid close attention to the Shaikh's utterances for a propitious omen, and found one in the following verse:

> 'The glorious Faridun was not an angel,
> He was not made of aloe wood or ambergris,
> Justice and munificence were the source of his celebrity,
> If you are munificent and just, you are Faridun.'[3]

Baba Farid was tremendously popular at this time. The soldiers of Sultan Nasiru'd-Din's army also visited him. The large crowd of men concerned him, so he left his house. A sleeve from his shirt was hung from the roof of his dwelling facing the street. Crowds of people came to kiss the sleeve and in the process it was torn to shreds. Baba Farid went to the mosque and on his instructions his disciples formed a circle

[1]*FF*, pp. 257-58.
[2]*Jawahar-i Faridi*, pp. 217-18.
[3]*FF*, pp. 112-13; *SA*, p. 81.

around him, so his devotees could not come too close. A *farrash* (menial servant) broke the circle of protectors and falling at the Shaikh's feet, kissed them, complaining of his indifference to the people, and for not thanking God for his many blessings.[1]

Baba Farid was not associated with the political intrigues of his time. It appears that Ulugh Khan had some contact with Baba Farid's sons before his accession, and that this estranged some of his enemies from Baba Farid. One of the future Balban's opponents was his cousin, Sher Khan, also the governor of Multan, and later poisoned by Balban on his accession to the Sultanate.[2] The *Fawa'idul-Fu'ad* related that Sher Khan had little respect for Baba Farid who would recite the following verse:

> 'Alas! You have no knowledge about me;
> When you would gain knowledge about me, you would repent.'[3]

As a result of Sher Khan's hostility towards Baba Farid, merchants and wealthy supporters appear to have stopped sending gifts to the sufis at the *jama'at-khana*. This action impoverished Baba Farid, his family and other members of his religious community, during the last years of his life, and they all were reduced to near starvation.[4]

Baba Farid foresaw the results of the struggle for political supremacy among the various spheres of power existing in the last years of Sultan Nasiru'd-Din's reign. Finally, the Sultan himself became a casualty in the contest and was assassinated by Balban.[5] The Shaikh, unconcerned with political manoeuvrings, offered assistance only to people who requested spiritual help and rarely made recommendations to worldly authorities. One of the latter occasions concerned an *'amil* (revenue officer) who was reported to have asked the Baba to recommend the *wali* (governor) of Ajodhan to refrain from harassing him. Baba Farid sent a message to the *wali* requesting that he treat the *'amil* kindly. However, the Shaikh was unsuccessful and the *wali* refused to heed his advice. When the *'amil* approached the Shaikh again, regretting the *'amil's* hardship, he suggested that perhaps the *'amil* might have similarly rejected the recommendation of someone else.[6]

The Baba was serenely indifferent to the reproaches of other men. Rude and insolent dervishes, perhaps qalandars, once visited the Shaikh. They claimed that during their long travels they had not come across one true dervish. The Shaikh requested them to sit down with him so they could become acquainted with a real dervish, but they refused. Before

[1] *FF*, p. 160.
[2] Ziya'u'd-Din Barani, *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, Calcutta, 1860-62, p. 65.
[3] *FF*, p. 234.
[4] *SA*, p. 66.
[5] 'Isami, *Futuhu's-Salatin*, pp. 163-66.
[6] *FF*, p. 162.

they left he begged them not to go through the desert but to take another route. Ignoring his advice, they proceeded to travel along the desert route. Shortly afterwards, news was brought that the four had died from heat exhaustion and the fifth, who finally reached a well, drank so much water that he also died.[1]

On another occasion a knife was presented to Baba Farid. However, he returned it saying that he would have preferred a needle as knives were used for cutting and needles were for stitching.[2]

To Baba Farid, sufism was a strenuous exercise leading one to a pious life within the society in which one lived. It demanded humility, modesty, patience, fortitude and a cleansing of the heart from all conceit. Self-abnegation involved careful concern for any offence to another, and in the event of such a situation, sincere and copious apologies were demanded.

Baba Farid was himself a scholar and wrote excellent poetry in Arabic, Persian and the local Hindawi dialect. He recited the Qur'an perfectly, popularized the study of the *'Awarifu'l-M'aarif* and lectured on the subtle philosophy of the *Lawa'ih* of Qazi Hamidu'd-Din Nagauri. Nevertheless, he did not pride himself on his intellectual achievements and felt a genuine sense of humility. He encouraged education in his disciples and considered the 'ulama' to be nobler than the common people, though he disliked their self-satisfied indifference to others. The *faqirs*, he asserted, were superior to the 'ulama' and occupied the same place among them as the full moon amongst a constellation of stars.[3]

Baba Farid illustrated the difference between *Shari'a*, *Tariqa* and *Haqiqa* by using the *zakat*, an obligatory payment for all Muslims, as an illustration. The *zakat* of *Sharia'a* was five *dirhams* out of 200, the *zakat* of *Tariqa* involved the payment of 195 *dirhams* out of 200 and the retention of only five *dirhams* and the *zakat* of *Haqiqa* entailed the payment of everything, while retaining nothing.[4]

Five hundred aphorisms of Baba Farid were collected, of which the following, selected by Amir Khwurd, give some insight into the Baba's broadly based, humanitarian teachings.

1. Pray to God alone for everyone else takes away but He gives. Whatever He gives cannot be taken away by anyone else.
2. Escaping from the carnal self should be deemed as a means of reaching God.
3. Do not satisfy the demands of the carnal self for its demands know no limit.
4. Do not regard the ignorant as amongst the living.
5. Avoid the ignorant who pose as though they were wise.
6. Do not utter a truth which resembles a lie.

[1]*FF*, p. 263. [2]*FF*, p. 239. [3]*SA*, p. 85. [4]*FF*, p. 117.

7. Do not sell what people do not wish to buy.
8. Do not worry about position and wealth.
9. Do not eat everybody's bread, but give bread to everybody.
10. Never forget death at any place.
11. Do not make a statement based on supposition.
12. Treat a calamity as the consequence of greed.
13. Do not boast of having committed a sin.
14. Do not make the heart a plaything of the devil.
15. Keep your internal self better than the external one.
16. Do not try to adorn yourself.
17. Do not lower yourself in order to secure a position.
18. Do not borrow either from the helpless or from the upstart.
19. Protect the honour of old families.
20. Strive to obtain fresh grace every day.
21. As far as possible prevent women from developing the habit of using abusive language.
22. Consider good health a divine blessing.
23. Be grateful but do not compel others to be grateful to you.
24. While doing good to others think that you are helping yourself.
25. Give up immediately that which your heart finds evil.
26. Do not retain a slave who wishes to be sold.
27. Seek a pretext to perform a good work.
28. Always keep the doors of peace open in a war.
29. Consider levity and harshness signs of weakness.
30. Do not consider yourself safe from the enemy however conciliatory he might appear.
31. Fear the man who fears you.
32. Do not rely on your own strength.
33. Self-restraint is never as imperative as it is at the time of sexual desire.
34. Do not forget religion in the company of state dignitaries.
35. Glory and honour depend upon equity and justice.
36. Be magnanimous during a period of personal affluence.
37. Do not consider anything a substitute for religion.
38. There is no compensation for the (loss) of time.
39. Be magnanimous to the righteous.
40. Be arrogant to the stubborn.
41. Do not be extravagant in entertaining guests.
42. Make wisdom and solitude your (main) provision.
43. Do not flee from calamity sent to you by God.
44. Consider the dervish who seeks riches as covetous.
45. Entrust the government to the care of a God-fearing vizier.
46. Annihilate the enemy by discussion and captivate the heart of friends by hospitality.

47. Consider worldliness an unforeseen calamity.
48. Seek out your faults.
49. Acquire wealth honestly in order to be able to retain it.
50. Acquire knowledge through humility.
51. Do not be concerned by the bitter words of enemies.
52. Do not flee from the enemy.
53. If you wish to avoid disgrace, do not beg.
54. If you wish to make the whole world your enemy, be arrogant.
55. Keep your good and bad points secret.
56. Protect religion through knowledge.
57. If you wish to be great be humble.
58. If you want satisfaction, do not be jealous.
59. Accept affliction as a gift.
60. Try to become immortal by obliterating your carnal self.[1]

The above sayings are profound, but the inner nature of the Baba's mystical consciousness is best expressed in the following verses which he often recited while praying in solitude:

'I pray to live only for the sake of loving Thee,
I wish to become dust and dwell eternally under
Thy feet.
My principal expectation from both worlds is that,
I should die and live for Thee.'[2]

The attention Baba Farid bestowed on the training of his chief disciples is vividly described in the conversations of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya.' The copy of the *khilafat-nama* given to him by the Baba is also preserved.[3] The latter regarded the relationship between a sufi teacher and his disciple as very close, with the former being responsible for his pupil's worldly and spiritual welfare.[4]

According to the Shaikh, the initiation of a disciple should be performed personally by his preceptor. He was opposed to the initiation customs involving head shaving rituals at the tombs of sufi saints. When one of his own sons performed such a ceremony at the foot of Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar's tomb, his father remarked that such an initiation was invalid. True initiations involved the disciple holding the Shaikh's hand,[5] while it was usual for his *pir* to offer blessings and prayers for the disciple's welfare.

The Baba took care that his *khilafat-namas* were quite accurate and

[1] *SA*, p. 75.
[2] *KM*, p. 224.
[3] *SA*, pp. 117-19.
[4] *FF*, pp. 30-1, 40, 75, 88, 161, 232-33.
[5] *FF*, p. 90.

not forged[1] as a disciple whom he considered unworthy of receiving a *khilafat-nama* threatened the Baba that he would prepare a similar document and use it for enlisting his own disciples. Maulana Badru'd-Din Ishaq who prepared copies of the *khilafat-nama* was required to sign them, and they were later endorsed by the Baba's senior disciple, Shaikh Jamalu'd-Din, who lived at Hansi.[2]

Having had two or three wives, the Baba's family was large. Some of his children died of starvation in infancy, but five sons and three daughters survived and outlived him. The eldest, Nasiru'd-Din, spent much of his life in prayer and meditation and lived as an agriculturalist.[3] Nasiru'd-Din's son, Shaikh Kamalu'd-Din, settled in Dhar in Malwa and became an outstanding sufi and Sultan Mahmud Khalji of Malwa erected a tomb over his grave.[4]

Baba's second son, Shihabu'd-Din, was a close associate of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya'.[5] The third,, Badru'd-Din Sulaiman, is said to have been accepted as a Chishti *khalifa* by the saints of Chisht.[6] Badru'd-Din's son and successor, Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Din, was regarded as one of the greatest sufi saints during Sultan 'Ala'u'd-Din Khalji's reign. At several places in Ajodhan, Dipalpur and in the hills near Kashmir, people had erected memorials and mausoleums to commemorate the Shaikh. His fame spread as far as Syria and Egypt. Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq appears to have been genuinely devoted to him and fugitives who took refuge in his *jama'at-khana* were never extradited to the government. Muhammad bin Tughluq built a tomb for the Shaikh after his death near his grandfather's mausoleum. Like Baba Farid, Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Din had spent his whole life in self-mortification, prayer and fasting.[7]

Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Din was succeeded by his son, Mu'izzu'd-Din, whom Muhammad bin Tughluq sent to Gujarat where he was killed by rebels.[8] The Sultan appointed Mu'izzu'd-Din's younger brother, 'Alamu'd-Din, as the *Shaikhu'l-Islam* and treated him with great respect.[9] It was mainly due to Shaikh Badru'd-Din that the descendants of Baba Farid spread throughout all of India, and became a significant part of the sufi movement in the sub-continent.

[1]*SA*, p. 221.
[2]*SA*, p. 221. For biographical notes on Baba Farid *see SA*, pp. 57-9; Jamali, pp. 31-50; *AA*, pp. 52-4, *A'in*, p. 169; *Gulshani-i Ibrahimi*, pp. 383-91; *Gulzar-i Abrar*, ff. 27a-30a; *Miratu'l-Asrar*, ff. 296a-308a; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, ff. 21b-48b.
[3]*SA*, p. 186.
[4]*SA*, p. 198; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, f. 115.
[5]*SA*, p. 187.
[6]*SA*, p. 188.
[7]*SA*, pp. 193-96; Barani, *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, p. 347; *AA*, 95. Ibn Battuta confused him with Shaikh Faridu'd-Din. Ibn Battuta, *Voyages D'Ibn Batoutah*, ed. by C. Defremery, *Et Le*, Dr B.R. Sanguinetti, III, Paris, 1855-59, p. 135; *Ma'ariju'l Wilayat*, f. 114b.
[8]*SA*, p. 196.
[9]*SA*, 197.

Baba Farid's favourite child, however, was not a sufi disciple. He was his fourth son, Nizamu'd-Din, who preferred the life of a soldier. Originally his father had wished to make him his spiritual successor.[1] It appears that Nizamu'd-Din did not treat his father with a great deal of respect, this, however, did not unduly concern the Shaikh. When his father died, Nizamu'd-Din was with Balban's army in Patiali (approximately two hundred kilometres east of Delhi). When he reached Ajodhan, the coffin was being taken for burial outside the city walls. He suggested to his brothers that it be brought inside so that pilgrims could also receive spiritual guidance from members of Baba Farid's descendants. His advice was taken. According to Amir Khwurd, Nizamu'd-Din was killed fighting against a Mongol army which had attacked Ajodhan. Later sources refer to his death during 'Ala'u'd-Din Khalji's invasion of Ranthambhor in 1301. Although not a sufi, Nizamu'd-Din's son became a disciple of the great Chishti saint, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya'.[2]

Baba Farid's fifth son, Shaikh Ya'qub, was a *malamati*[3] and died in obscurity.[4] Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' cared for Ya'qub's two sons and sent one, 'Azizu'd-Din, to Deogir many years before Muhammad bin Tughluq made it his second capital. 'Azizu'd-Din's own success in Deogir was impressive.[5]

Of Baba Farid's three daughters, Bibi Sharifa, who was widowed at a very early age and did not remarry, was the most pious. Her father often stated that if women could have become *khalifas* he would not have hesitated in making her one. His third daughter was married to one of her father's disciples, Shaikh Badru'd-Din Ishaq. A number of children of this marriage were brought up by Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya'.[6]

Later authorities give a long list of the *khalifas* of Baba Farid, but Amir Khwurd lists only seven. According to Baba himself, the *khalifas* were chosen in three different ways. The most outstanding were those whom God inspired the Shaikh to select. These were the *Rahmani khalifas*. The second category were those personally chosen by the Shaikh because of their own merits. The third group consisted of those disciples whom the Shaikh accepted as successors on the recommendation of others.[7] It seems that later authorities included the *khalifas* from all three categories, while Amir Khwurd lists *khalifas* of the first two groups. Baba Farid's most outstanding *khalifa* was Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya', but the rest shall be described briefly.

[1] *KA*, pp. 224-25.
[2] *SA*, pp. 189-90; *AA*, pp. 70-1.
[3] *See* Chapter One, pp. 41-2, *supra*.
[4] *SA*, p. 191.
[5] *SA*, pp. 197-98.
[6] *SA*, pp. 192-93.
[7] *SA*, p. 345.

The disciples and khalifas of Baba Farid

Shaikh Najibu'd-Din Matwakkil (Trusting in God) was the younger brother of Shaikh Faridu'd-Din. He lived in Delhi in a state of abject poverty. Having obtained an excellent education, he remained very fond of books. According to Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' he had a very accurate copy of *'Awarifu'l-Ma'arif.*[1] He ardently wanted *Jami'u'l-Hikayat* by 'Awfi[2] to be transcribed but had no money to pay for this to be done. If he was able to find money to pay the scribe's wages, he could not procure paper and other materials. If he could afford the paper, the scribe was unavailable. Once a scribe, called Hamid, offered to do the task. The Shaikh had only one *dirham.* Hamid bought some paper and commenced the work. Gradually, however, the Shaikh obtained some *futuh* and was able to afford both paper and wages and the book was transcribed.[3]

It would appear that Shaikh Najibu'd-Din accepted the post of Imam of a mosque built by a Turkic officer in Delhi who also gave the Shaikh a house to live in. After the Turk spent 100,000 *jitals* at his daughter's wedding, the Shaikh suggested that if this money were used on God's work, it would earn a large amount of spiritual reward. Indignant, the Turk dismissed him from the mosque and seized the house. When Shaikh Najibu'd-Din met Baba Farid at Ajodhan, the latter advised that someone else would be appointed to help care for the former's material needs. Later a Turk called Aitkar, a similar name as the man who had made the Shaikh an Imam, cared for the Shaikh's family.[4]

The family, however, lived in impecunious circumstances. The following anecdotes illustrate the poverty experienced by both Shaikh Najibu'd-Din and his dependants. On a day of *'Id*, when the Shaikh was returning from prayers, a large crowd followed, kissing his hands and touching his garment. Some dervishes, probably qalandars, were greatly impressed and went to the Shaikh's house, believing that such a noted figure would provide lavish entertainment for his guests. However, there were no refreshments in the house which could be offered to them, and nothing which could be sold to provide it. The Shaikh took a glass of water and stood with it before the dervishes. Being spiritualists also, they under-

[1]*FF*, p. 30.

[2]Muhammad Bin Muhammad, Sadidu'd-Din, Bukhari adopted the surname, Awfi, from his ancestor 'Abdu'r-Rahman bin Awf, a companion of the Prophet Muhammad. He served at the courts of the Sultans of Samarqand and Khwarazm, and travelled extensively. He then went to the court of Nasiru'd-Din Qubacha of Multan and in 1220 dedicated his anthology, entitled *Lubab al-Albab*, to him. Finally he entered the service of Sultan Shamsu'd-Din Iltutmish. At his court he completed his famous work *Jawami' al-Hikayat wa Lawami' al-Rawayat* in 625/1228, dedicating it to Iltutmish's vizier, Nizamu'l-Mulk Muhammad Junaidi. The *Jawami' al-Hikayat* or *Jami'u'l-Hikayat* comprises more than 2,000 historical and literary anecdotes and is a very valuable sociological and cultural study.

[3]*FF*, p. 31.

[4]*FF*, p. 91.

stood, and drank the water in order to receive the giver's blessing.[1]

The poverty of Shaikh Najibu'd-Din aroused pity even among the qalandars. Once a group of them raised five hundred silver *tankas* among themselves, and presented the money to the Shaikh to be used for his own needs. Believing that, 'if you get money, spend it, for there is no dearth of gifts; if it goes away, do not store it for fear of not getting it again,' in true sufi fashion, the Shaikh distributed the same day the entire amount among the poor.[2]

The Shaikh made nineteen visits to Baba Farid at Ajodhan, and on each occasion the Baba prayed that there might be a further visit. On the nineteenth he refrained from his usual prayer, and a few months before the Baba's death Shaikh Najibu'd-Din died. He was buried outside the town near the Manda gateway. According to Shaikh 'Abdu'l Haqq, Najibu'd-Din's grave lay on the path to the tomb of Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din. A structure was erected on it by Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq.

Shaikh Najibu'd-Din had two sons, Ahmad and Muhammad. There is no mention made of his disciples, although he was authorized to enrol followers.[3]

Another of Baba Farid's leading *khalifas* was Maulana Badru'd-Din Ishaq, the steward of his *jama'at-khana* and also his son-in-law. A native of Delhi, he obtained there an excellent education. His intellectual curiosity, however, was not satisfied by remaining permanently in that city. He left, carrying a large number of books, in quest of knowledge. Meeting Baba Farid at Ajodhan, the Maulana decided to remain there, and became his disciple. During the Shaikh's lifetime, the Maulana became his favourite disciple. After the master's death, his relations with one of Shaikh Farid's sons, Badru'd-Din Sulaiman, became estranged. To prevent any conflict, the Maulana retired to the Jami' mosque at Ajodhan where he taught the Qur'an. Amir Khwurd's father, and some other children, who later rose to prominence as saints, were educated by the Maulana.

Greatly emotional, the Maulana's eyes were constantly filled with tears. Often he would recite a single mystical verse, repeating it while crying unrestrainedly. He died soon after the Baba's death and his family was cared for by Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' who had been a close friend. During his lifetime, the Maulana wrote an Arabic grammar called *Tasrif-i Badri*, but unfortunately it has not survived.

While the Baba was alive the Maulana, in accordance with his master's orders, made Malik Sharafu'd-Din Kubra, the *muqta'* of Dipalpur, his disciple. After a period Sharafu'd-Din was imprisoned by the Sultan and summoned to Delhi. Malik petitioned the Maulana to intervene. The

[1]*KM*, p. 75.

[2]Jamali, p. 100.

[3]*SA*, pp. 161, 169; Jamali, pp. 99-102; *AA*, pp. 60-1; *Mir'atu'l-Asrar*, ff. 293b-306a; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, ff. 96a-98b.

request was sent through a messenger whom he dispatched to the Maulana carrying some rock melons. When the messenger arrived, Maulana Badru'd-Din Ishaq was with some friends, among whom was an important official of Ajodhan, Qazi Sadru'd-Din. The Maulana asked the Qazi to cut and distribute the fruit in such a way that Sharafu'd-Din's share should be given to him. Removing his turban, the Maulana emphatically stated he would neither eat the melon nor wear his turban unless Sharafu'd-Din was released. The latter returned to the *jama'at-khana* soon afterwards and told them he had been freed after the Sultan had learnt he had been incriminated unjustly.[1]

The most senior disciple of Baba Farid, and a close friend of his, was Shaikh Jamalu'd-Din of Hansi. He was a scholar and a poet. Before becoming a sufi, Shaikh Jamalu'd-Din had been the *khatib* of Hansi, owning villages and extensive property. Discipleship with the Baba meant abandoning material prosperity. When his poverty became overwhelming, Jamalu'd-Din, using Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' as a go-between, informed the Baba of his extreme impecuniosity. Through the Shaikh the Baba replied that it was Jamalu'd-Din's duty to bear the spiritual burden assigned to him.

The Baba authorized Shaikh Jamalu'd-Din to endorse the *khilafat-nama* awarded by him, and the latter performed this duty most conscientiously. Once Shaikh Jamal refused to endorse the *khilafat-nama* which the Baba had granted a disciple, under some pressure. Shaikh Jamal was so angry that he tore the paper containing the *khilafat-nama* to pieces, while informing the disciple he was unworthy of such an honour. Baba Farid supported Shaikh Jamalu'd-Din's actions telling the disciple he was unable to mend what Jamal had rent apart.

Two books written by Shaikh Jamalu'd-Din have survived: the *Mulhimat*, written in Arabic, a prose work consisting of sufi aphorisms, and his *Diwan*, which was written in Persian.

It was mainly his deep affection for Shaikh Jamalu'd-Din which prompted Baba Farid to stay in Hansi for a period of twelve years. To Baba Shaikh Jamal was his *jamal* (beauty). When the former returned to Ajodhan, Shaikh Jamal visited him frequently but as he aged, he sent his maid-servant, Madar-i Muminan (the mother of the faithful).

After Shaikh Jamalu'd-Din's death, the maid-servant brought the Shaikh's son, Burhanu'd-Din to Baba Farid. To her great surprise he made Badru'd-Din his *khalifa*. The servant pointed out that Badru'd-Din was very young but the Shaikh replied that the crescent of Islam was also small.[2]

Another disciple, Shaikh 'Arif, who did not appear to be very promising, had been deputed by Baba Farid to Siwistan (Sehwan) in Sind. He

[1] *SA*, pp. 162-78; *KM*, pp. 116, 130, 137, 224; *AA*, p. 67. *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, ff. 99b-101a.
[2] *SA*, pp. 178-84; *AA*, pp. 67-8; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, ff. 98b-99b.

took the office of Imam of a Malik[1] of Uch and Multan. Once the Malik sent one hundred *tankas* to Baba Farid through 'Arif, who kept fifty *tankas* himself. Upon presenting the money to his master, the Baba smiled and said that 'Arif had already divided it on a brotherly basis, rather than giving him the entire amount entrusted to him. 'Arif was ashamed and beseeched forgiveness. The Shaikh renewed his initiation, 'Arif shaved his head and once more firmly accepted the sufi path. The Baba again sent him to Siwistan, but after some time he returned apologizing that he had not found himself strong enough to perform the duties of a *khalifa* of the Shaikh. The Baba advised him to go on a pilgrimage.[2]

Early sources do not refer to Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Din 'Ali bin Ahmad Sabir, the founder of the Sabiri branch of the Chishti order. According to the *Siyaru'l-Auliya'* he was a gifted dervish who exhibited a high degree of spiritualism and self control. The Sabiri branch rose to prominence in the sufi movement mainly because of the popularity of Shaikh Ahmad 'Abdu'l-Haqq, who will be discussed in Chapter Four. When Shaikh 'Abdu'l Haqq wrote the *Akhbaru'l-Akhyar*, the tomb of Shaikh Sabir in Kaliyar, near Roorkee in the Saharanpur district, of what is now western Uttar Pradesh, was quite famous, and he had many devotees. The story of the rediscovery of the Shaikh's tomb in Shah-Jahan's reign, and the account of the miracles attributed to the Shaikh described by Ilahdiya, are legendary. According to the latter, the sufi whose *khilafat-nama*, Shaikh Jamalu'd-Din had torn was Sabir, and he was also depicted as the nephew of Baba Farid.[3]

The greatest sufi saint of the fourteenth century in India and the most celebrated disciple of Baba Farid was Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya'. Bada'un, east of Delhi, was his birthplace. Even prior to the conquest of Delhi by the Turks, Bada'un had been a respectable centre of Islam. Some time between 1202 and 1209, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din's grandfather, Saiyid 'Ali, accompanied by his cousin Saiyid 'Arab, migrated from Bukhara to Bada'un. Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din was born in 636/1238.[4] His real name was Muhammad and his father was called Ahmad. The latter died when Nizamu'd-Din was five years old. His mother, endowed with great piety and foresight, selected Bada'un's most gifted teachers for her son's education. His first instructor was Shadi Muqri, an expert in reciting the Qur'an. His teaching was considered to be miraculous and enabled his students to master the Qur'an perfectly.[5] The other was Maulana 'Ala'u'd-Din Usuli[6] who, although not formally initiated into

[1]A high official dignitary.

[2]*FF*, p. 229; *SA*, pp. 184-85.

[3]*AA*, p. 69; *Miratu'l-Asrar*, ff. 344a-347b; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, f. 104a; *Siyaru'l-Aqtab* Lucknow, 1881, pp. 177-84.

[4]*SA*, p. 154.

[5]*FF*, p. 169.

[6]The Maulana refused to accept gifts and starved himself incessantly. He generally ate seeds out of which the oil had previously been extracted. On one occasion his barber came

sufi practices, was exceedingly saintly. The Shaikh studied Abu'l-Hasan Ahmad bin Muhammad's compendium of *Fiqh*, entitled *Mukhtasar al-Quduri*, under his guidance.[1]

Around 1253, when ordered to put on a turban as a sign of his graduation, Nizamu'd-Din was without funds to buy one. His mother, however, assisted by her slave girl spun some yarn, and a neighbour speedily wove material for a turban. With some sweets he went to Maulana 'Ala'u'd-Din, who supplemented some more food from his own house in order to make a feast. 'Ali Maula, a great saint, who will be referred to later,[2] was invited. After the meal, the Maulana took the turban and asked 'Ali Maula to wrap it around Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din's head. At each winding, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din placed his head at the foot of Shaikh 'Ali. So touched was the Shaikh that he prophesied Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din's future prominence as a saint. There were two reasons which prompted this 'Ali Maula stated: firstly, Nizamu'd-Din had prostrated himself before his elders; and secondly, his turban was completely made of cotton, without a single silken thread, thus proving his simplicity and piety.[3]

At the same time, when Nizamu'd-Din was twelve years old, and studying under Maulana Usuli, he first heard of Baba Farid through a *qawwal* (a musician) who had been to both Multan and Ajodhan. The *qawwal* first related to Nizamu'd-Din the intensely religious atmosphere in the khanqah of Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya', where even his slave girls performed constant *zikr*. Then he gave an account of Baba Farid's *jama'at-khana* at Ajodhan. Nizamu'd-Din was so excited that after each prayer he began to repeat the name of Baba Farid.[4]

When he was sixteen, Nizamu'd-Din, accompanied by his mother and sister, left for Delhi in order to complete his education. In the capital he first stayed at an inn in the neighbourhood of Shaikh Najibu'd-Din Mutwakkil's house. Intelligence and wit made Nizamu'd-Din an excellent debater; he also studied both *Hadis* and *Fiqh*. Shamsu'l-Malik, who had served as a *mustaufi*[5] during Balban's reign was amongst his earliest and most learned teachers. Fellow pupils of the Shaikh included Qazi Fakhru'd-Din Naqila[6] and Maulana Burhanu'd-Din. All three were

to shave him. The Maulana had been eating seeds but hid them in his turban to hide his depressed circumstances. When he removed his turban the seeds fell out. Deeply moved, the barber informed a rich acquaintance of the Maulana's poverty and a substantial gift was sent to the dervish. Refusing to accept it, the Maulana reproached his barber for exposing his secret and the latter was forgiven only after many entreaties. *KM*, p. 190.

[1] *KM*, pp. 190-91; *FF*, p. 181.

[2] *See* Chapter Three, p. 200, *supra*.

[3] *KM*, pp. 190-91.

[4] *FF*, pp. 163-64.

[5] An officer in the Auditor-General's department controlling government expenditure.

[6] If a pupil was absent from his lessons, Khwaja Shamsu'l-Malik would ask what the teacher had done to him that he did not come to class. *FF*, pp. 78-9.

favourites of Shamsu'l-Malik who bestowed on them special attention and tuition.[1]

During his days as a student in Delhi, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din had no means of support. Nevertheless, poverty and near-starvation failed to undermine his enthusiasm for learning. On the days when the house was bereft of food, his mother consoled him by saying that they were the guests of God. She herself, weakened by hunger, finally died after first having committed the material and spiritual care of her son to God.[2]

His studies having qualified him for the post of qazi, Nizamu'd-Din urged Shaikh Najibu'd-Din Mutwakkil to pray that he might receive such an appointment.[3] The latter, however, advised him not to take this course, and Nizamu'd-Din decided to concentrate on the life of a dervish.

In 655/1257–58 Nizamu'd-Din left Delhi for Ajodhan and met Shaikh Faridu'd-Din Ganj-i Shakar. He was welcomed with a great deal of honour and warmth by Baba Farid who offered him a bed in the *jama'at-khana*.[4] Nizamu'd-Din was immediately initiated and his head shaved. This process was accompanied by gentle admonitions[5] from Baba Farid suggesting that he should also lose the conceit he had developed as an *'alim*. The Baba urged him to become fully involved in ascetic exercises on his return to Delhi. Fasting was the first half of the way along the sufi path, said the Baba, and prayers and pilgrimages the other.[6] On another occasion, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din asked the Baba whether he should exclusively devote himself to supererogatory prayers by abandoning his studies, but Baba Farid suggested that he continue both, as the two were necessary for the life of a dervish and he would then see which would emerge as the most dominant.[7]

On the second visit to Ajodhan, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din learnt six chapters of the Qur'an under the Baba's tutorship, also the *Tamhid* of Abu Shakur Sulami and the *'Awarif'ul-Ma'arif*.[8] In Jumada I 663/ February 1265,[9] the Shaikh made his third and final visit to the Baba.

[1]The following assessment by Balban of his three principal qazis, of whom one was Fakhru'd-Din Naqila, is interesting. Balban said that Fakhru'd-Din Naqila feared him but not God, the military qazi feared God but not the Sultan and Qazi Minhaj, the author of *Tabaqat-i Nasiri*, feared neither. *Sururu's-Sudur*, pp. 251-52.

[2]*SA*, pp. 152-53.

[3]*FF*, p. 32.

[4]*SA*, p. 107.

[5]*FF*, p. 34.

[6]*SA*, p. 112.

[7]*SA*, p. 107. [8]*FF*, pp. 29-30; *SA*, p. 106.

[9]*SA*, pp. 131-32. Relying uncritically on the *Siyaru'l-Auliya'*, Nizami says that the visit took place in Jumada I, 664/February, 1266 and the *khilafat-nama* is dated 13 Ramazan 664/18 June 1266. *The life and times of Shaikh Faridu'd Din*, p. 77. The main difficulty in following this chronology is that the Baba is believed to have died on 5 Muharram 664/ 17 October 1265. *AA*, p. 54. Nizami also accepts this date (*see* p. 56.) but fails to reconcile the two dates which imply that the Baba would have been visited by the Shaikh five months after his death and the *khilafat-nama* granted nine months after his death. It would therefor seem that 664 must be a printing error. Nizami's conversion of Hijra dates is also wrong.

He received his *khilafat-nama* from Baba Farid on 13 Ramazan 663/29 June 1265. It recorded that Muhammad, son of Ahmad, had studied the *Tamhidu'l-Muhtadi*[1] of Abu Shakur with great precision under his direction, and was now authorized to teach. Moreover, he was permitted to disseminate the Baba's teachings he had acquired and was advised to lead an ascetic life.

Asking the Shaikh to show his *khilafat-nama* to Maulana Jamalu'd-Din at Hansi, and to Qazi Muntajabu'd-Din at Delhi, the Baba blessed him saying:

> 'You will be a tree under whose shadow the people will find rest... you should strengthen your spirits by devotion...I have handed over all these things to you for at the time of my death you will not be present.'[2]

When Shaikh Jamalu'd-Din saw the *khilafat-nama* he greatly approved and thanked God that such a worthy disciple had obtained it.[3] The life of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' in Delhi was to become the epitome of Baba Farid's teachings, and it marked the crystallization of the ideology of the Chishti Order.

The method by which Baba Farid trained Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' to take up his position as successor in the order became engraved in the latter's memory. Two anecdotes from the *Fawa'idu'l-Fu'ad* indicate that the course was extremely severe. It is unclear whether the stories relate to the Shaikh's second visit to Ajodhan, but most probably they occurred during his first. Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din had originally gone there having had a distinguished career as a scholar. He lived in extremely impecunious and materially-deprived circumstances. Seeing him, a friend of the Shaikh's expressed great sympathy. When told the story, Baba Farid suggested that the Shaikh recite to his friend the following verse:

> 'You are not my fellow traveller.
> Tread your own path.
> May you be affluent and I downtrodden.'[4]

Then the Baba ordered him to take a tray of food from the kitchen and carry it on his head to his friend. This deeply moved his friend, who removed the tray from the Shaikh's head. After Baba Farid's words were repeated, the Shaikh's friend wished to meet him and ordered his servants

[1]The work is on *Ash'ari Kalam* or scholastic theology.
[2]*SA*, pp. 116-17.
[3]*SA*, p. 117.
[4]*SA*, p. 239.

to take the empty tray to Baba Farid, but the Shaikh insisted on carrying the tray back in the same manner he had brought it.[1]

The severity of Baba Farid's tutelage is also clearly depicted in the following story. The Baba was teaching his disciples from a defective copy of the *'Awarifu'l-Ma'arif* and at the same time taking great care to correct the errors. His pupil remarked that the Baba's brother, Shaikh Najibu'd-Din Mutwakkil, had a more perfect copy of the work. Baba Farid reacted vehemently against such a suggestion, which appeared to him to imply an inability on his part to correct the copy. The Shaikh was amazed when he discovered this, as his statement had been intended merely as a factual one. Falling at his master's feet, he apologized profusely. The Baba was unsatisfied, however, and in despair his disciple contemplated taking his own life. Finally, due to the supplication of one of his sons, the Baba relented telling Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din that he had done it for his own purification as: 'the *pir* is the *mashshata* (hairdresser) of the *murids* (disciples).'

On his return from his first visit to Ajodhan, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din repaid some small loans.[2] Being without his own home he lived in the house of a friend, 'Imadu'l-Mulk, the Rawat-i 'Arz.[3] The latter was the maternal grandfather of Amir Khusraw. The sons of the Rawat-i 'Arz's had gone to live in their *aqta'*. The house was a large three-storeyed one, near the bastion of the Delhi fort. The lower storey was occupied by the Kirmani family, the grandfather and the father of Amir Khwurd. The middle storey was used by the Shaikh and the third by other sufis. Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din was served by the Kirmanis. After about two years, Rawat-i 'Arz's sons returned without warning and evicted the Shaikh. The Kirmanis carried the Shaikh's only possession, a bundle of books, to a small thatched mosque situated in front of the house of Siraj Baqqal. This was the first of many moves that the Shaikh and the Kirmanis were to make during the following few years, until they finally settled with Shamsu'd-Din Sharabdar[4], Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din's disciple.

During this time, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' spent long periods committing the Qur'an to memory and many hours in the wilderness. About 1286, he became disenchanted with life in Delhi and decided to leave the capital. Amir Khusraw had returned from Multan because of Prince Muhammad's death in March 1285 and lived in Patiali. The Shaikh planned to go to Patiali but later went to a place called Bansala, in the vicinity of Delhi.[5] There, too, he was unable to find somewhere to

[1] *SA*, pp. 239-40.

[2] *FF*, pp. 30-1, 155.

[3] A Hindi title for the *'Ariz* or officer responsible for recruitment, salary administration and the maintenance of discipline in the army.

[4] An officer responsible for controlling the supply and dispersal of the Sultan's drinks, both alcoholic and non-alcoholic.

[5] *SA*, p. 110.

live. Finally, he moved to Ghiyaspur, a small village near Kilukhari, then virtually unknown to the citizens of Delhi. Although the melons were cheap in Ghiyaspur, the greater part of the season passed without the Shaikh eating a single slice. No regular *futuh* was received, and only a *zambil* provided the Shaikh and a few disciples with sustenance.[1]

It appears that after his return from Ajodhan, the Shaikh still continued his studies. Maulana Kamalu'd-Din Zahid, who was not only a distinguished scholar of *Hadis* but also an ascetic, was his teacher. Sultan Balban desired the Maulana to act as his Imam and lead his prayers. The Maulana, however, refused, informing the Sultan that the only thing left to him were his own prayers which he did not wish to waste by acting as the Sultan's Imam. Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din's and the Maulana's temperaments were identical, and the former made excellent progress in his studies. On 22 Rabi' I 679/22 July 1280, the Maulana gave the Shaikh a certificate confirming that he had studied under him the *Mashariqu'l-Anwar*[2] consisting of the most significant aspects of the *Sahih-Bukhari* and the *Sahih-Muslim*, diligently and perceptively. The certificate also referred to Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din as *Maqbul al-Masha'ikh al-Kibar* (Approved One of the Great Sufis),[3] this indicates he had already achieved a certain fame during his teacher's lifetime.

The death of Balban was accompanied by great confusion and political upheaval. His successor, Sultan Mu'izzu'd-Din Kaiqubad (1287–90), made Kilukhari, about two kilometres from Ghiyaspur, his new capital. Consequently Ghiyaspur became a much busier suburb of Delhi. The Shaikh began to contemplate moving, however the importunities of a sufi forced him to abandon the idea.[4]

Mu'izzu'd-Din Kaiqubad's successor, Jalalu'd-Din Khalji, (1290–96) was informed of the deprived circumstances of the Shaikh and his disciples. He sent *futuh* and also made an offer of some villages. Starvation having driven them to the point of death, a number of disciples urged the Shaikh to accept the gift. Consulting the Kirmanis and some of the senior disciples of Baba Farid, they advised Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din to reject the

[1] *SA*, p. 113.

[2] The *Mashariqu'l-Anwar* was the most popular book on *Hadis* and composed by the eminent Bada'un-born Indian, Maulana Raziu'd-Din Saghani. It consisted of a selection of 2,253 *Hadises* of the Prophet Muhammad from the following, two principal works on *Hadis* both known as *Sahih* (Of the Highest Authority). The first is the *Sahih* of Muhammad ibn Isma'il al-Bukhari (810-70), and the other is by his contemporary and rival, Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj of Nishapur. Saghani was a most critical author and rejected many *Hadises*, long regarded as correct. Saghani also wrote another work entitled the *Risala fi'l Ahadis al-Mawzu'a* in which he discussed the problems of extracting fabricated *Hadises*. Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din's understanding of Saghani also made him cautious in accepting doubtful *Hadises*.

[3] *SA*, pp. 104-06.

[4] *SA*, p. 112.

offer. Delighted, the Shaikh replied that he was uncaring if all his disciples deserted him, his concern was only for them.[1]

Under Sultan 'Ala'u'd-Din Khalji (1296–1316), Ghiyaspur became a prosperous suburb of Delhi. A large number of disciples were attracted to Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya'. These included the powerful and the common, the rich, poor, learned and illiterate, townsfolk, villagers, soldiers, warriors, freemen and slaves. Naturally many could not become disciples of the Shaikh, but their contact with him undoubtedly added a new dimension to an understanding of Islamic ideals of morality and religious observances.

From Delhi to Ghiyaspur, platforms with thatched roofs were constructed with wells dug for water for the performance of ablutions before prayers of the Shaikh's visitors. Senior disciples exercised a profound influence over junior ones, and an atmosphere of serenity and spirituality surrounded the area.[2] Sultan 'Ala'u'd-Din's strict market regulations and his suppression of drinking and debauchery were prompted by political and economic reasons, however, a positive moral consciousness was engendered by the Shaikh's influence and by that of the sufi movement in Ghiyaspur.

Sultan 'Ala'u'd-Din Khalji and members of his family, including the heir-apparent, Khizr Khan, shared great trust in the Shaikh. The Sultan highly respected the Shaikh, although he appears not to have visited the *jama'at-khana*. Between 1309 and 1310, the Sultan's general, Malik Na'ib, marched on the Kakatiya kingdom of Telingana and invaded the Warangal fort. The usual method of communication between the army and the capital collapsed, giving rise to considerable anxiety in the city. Turning to the Shaikh, the Sultan sent messengers requesting his assistance. Reassuring him, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din prophesied victory, at the same time extending hopes for an even greater success in the future. The same day news of the army's defeat of the enemy was received from Malik Na'ib.[3]

During the last years of 'Ala'u'd-Din's life, the intrigues of Malik Na'ib deprived Khizr Khan of succeeding legitimately to the throne. Malik Na'ib had Khizr Khan blinded and Qutbu'd-Din Mubarak Shah (1316–20), another claimant to the throne, narrowly escaped death. When Mubarak Shah ascended the throne he had Khizr Khan and the latter's brothers executed. Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din took no interest in political upheavals but could not escape the brunt of Sultan Mubarak Shah's fury for having made Khizr Khan his disciple. Speaking disparagingly of the Shaikh he began to hatch schemes against him. He prohibited his nobles from visiting Ghiyaspur. Mubarak Shah also constructed a mosque, the Masjid-i Miri, where all the sufis and 'ulama'

[1] *SA*, pp. 114-15.
[2] Barani, *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, pp. 341-45.
[3] ibid, p. 332.

were ordered to perform their prayers. The Shaikh refused to comply with the Sultan's orders, remonstrating that the mosque in his neighbourhood had a greater claim on him.

On the first day of each month, the entire religious community of Delhi gathered at the palace to offer congratulations to the Sultan. The Shaikh further angered the Sultan by sending a servant as his delegate. Sultan Qutbu'd-Din Mubarak threatened Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din with serious consequences if he personally failed to pay homage. Refusing to heed the threat, the Shaikh quietly prayed at his mother's tomb and returned to his *jama'at-khana*. As the last day of the month approached, the capital was filled with anxiety, while the Shaikh himself remained calm. But the first day of the next month did not come for the Sultan, he was assassinated on the first night of the Jumada II, 720/8 July 1320[1] by his favourite and protégée, Khusraw Khan Barwar.[2]

The reign of Khusraw, who assumed the name Nasiru'd-Din Khusraw, was, for historians, a brief but controversial one. Ghazi Malik, the governor of Dipalpur, marched on Delhi to overthrow the self-appointed Sultan. All medieval, and some modern, historians interpret the battle between Ghazi Malik and Khusraw as a Hindu-Islamic conflict. In fact, the struggle was political, each party raising emotive, religious slogans to rally support. Khusraw paid large sums of money to the sufis and dervishes of Delhi to pray for his success. Some of them accepted the payment, keeping it safely so that it could be returned to the next ruler if Khusraw lost. Three eminent dervishes refused financial gifts; Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din, however, accepted 500,000 *tankas* offered him and, as with other *futuhs*, distributed the money amongst both the needy townsfolk and dervishes.[3]

After his accession to the Delhi Sultanate, Ghiyasu'd-Din Tughluq (1320–25) ordered the recipients of Khushraw's money to refund it to the treasury. Some sufis acceded to his wish; Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din replied to the Sultan that the money belonged to the treasury of the Muslims which he had himself distributed among the poor, while expending nothing on himself.[4] The Sultan was unable to take any action against the sufi leader, but this marked the beginning of the conflict between them which abated only with their deaths.

The 'ulama' and some sufis were envious of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din's personal popularity among the élite and the masses, and attempted to further estrange relations between him and the Sultan. They re-opened the age-old question of *sama'* as a weapon by which to attack him. They alleged that the Shaikh's only concern in life was indulgence in the legally prohibited *sama'*, and he and his disciples were totally engrossed in

[1]Amir Khusraw, *Tughluq Nama*, Hyderabad, 1933, p. 18.
[2]*SA*, pp. 150-51.
[3]Jamali, p. 88, *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, pp. 418-19.
[4]Jamali, p. 88.

merrymaking. At the suggestion of the anti-Shaikh faction, the Sultan organized a *mahzar*.[1] Over two hundred and fifty scholars were lined up to oppose the Shaikh who attended with his disciples, including Maulana Fakru'd-Din Zarradi.[2] The latter, having written a book on the subject, believed he was well prepared to answer the objections of the orthodox. Qazi Ruknu'd-Din Walwalji, an inveterate enemy of the Shaikh, who enjoyed dominating any situation, led the discussion. Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din quoted a *Hadis* from the Prophet, but the Qazi objected to his argument on the grounds that the Shaikh was not a *mujtahid*[3] and therefore not entitled to quote *hadis* as an authority. Instead he should support his argument from the statement of Imam Abu Hanifa (699–767), the founder of the Hanafite jurisprudence. Maulana 'Alamu'd-Din, a grandson of Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya, assumed the role of arbitrator. He had also written a book on the subject of *sama'*, and had travelled to Mecca, Medina, Egypt and Syria. Everywhere he had been, he argued, sufis indulged in *sama'*; there was no objection in those areas to its use by those who knew its merits. As the Shaikh and his companions were holy men, endowed with ethical and ascetic qualities of a high calibre, argued Maulana 'Alamu'd-Din, no objection could be raised against their indulgence in *sama'*. Sultan Ghiyasu'd-Din Tughluq refused to give a judgement, and the Shaikh and his followers were allowed to depart honourably.

On his return to the *jama'at-khana*, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din expressed regret at the disregard of the Qazi and the 'ulama' for the Prophet's tradition and he prophesied that some calamity was likely to befall the capital.[4] It would seem that the Sultan was satisfied with the argument of the sufis and later dismissed Qazi Ruknu'd-Din Walwalji. A number of later works such as the *Tabaqat-i Akbari*, however, assert that the Sultan continued to bear enmity towards the Shaikh and ordered him to leave Delhi before he returned from his Bengal and Tirhut expedition, and the Shaikh is reported to have remarked, 'Delhi is still far away'.[5] This myth became popular mainly because of Sultan Ghiyasu'd-Din Tughluq's sudden death caused by the collapse of the Afghanpur pavilion hurriedly built for a grand reception. Although there is no indication that the misunderstanding between the Sultan and the Shaikh abated, the Sultan was indeed too shrewd a politician to adopt extreme measures against the ageing Shaikh, who remained bed-ridden with an illness for some months before his death. They both died in 1325, the Sultan in Sha'ban 725/

[1]Jamali, pp. 88-89.

[2]*infra*, p. 182.

[3]The lawyer qualified to use *ijtihad* or a method of reasoning through the use of analogy; the term is opposed to *muqallid* (imitator or follower).

[4]*SA*, pp. 525-32. Similar prophesies are also ascribed to other saints. The Shaikh himself, however, did not quote a *Hadis* but an opinion expressed by Ghazali.

[5]Nizamu'd-Din Ahmad, *Tabaqat-i Akbari*, I, Calcutta, 1868, p. 198.

July 1325 and the Shaikh on 18 Rabi' II 725/3 April, of the same year.[1]

Before Zu'lhijja 724/November-December 1324, the Shaikh had appointed only three or four *khalifas*. In that month he decided to appoint more, and a list was drawn up in consultation with senior disciples. A model *khilafat-nama* was drafted by Maulana Fakhru'd-Din Zarradi, the copies were produced by Saiyid Husain, the uncle of Amir Khwurd, and signed by both the copyist and Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya'. They are dated 20 Zu'lhijja 724/8 December 1324,[2] but among the Chishtis a controversy developed over their authenticity, and it was alleged that they were not signed by the Shaikh while in a state of full consciousness.

Before his death, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din summoned his relations as well as his servant, Iqbal, and ordered them to confirm that there was not a morsel of food in the house. They assured him that only a few handfuls of grain remained, and they had been kept for the *langar*.[3] The Shaikh was enraged at Iqbal preserving worthless assets and ordered it to be immediately given to the poor.[4]

Shaikhu'l-Islam Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din Multani led Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din's funeral prayer. Although he had wished to be buried in the open, Muhammad bin Tughluq later constructed an imposing dome over the Shaikh's grave.[5] Both Hindus and Muslims were attracted to the Shaikh's tomb and considered its dust a sacred relic.

Sufi sources frequently mention the Shaikh's *jama'at-khana*, but fail to give a detailed description. Stray references tend to imply that Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din's quarters and the *jama'at-khana* were two separate units. A banyan tree was the main feature of the complex. The *jama'at-khana* itself was a pillared hall, with a few rooms on the first floor, and an open space in front. Its court-yard was surrounded by four walls and access was through a vestibule. On both sides of the hall there were small rooms which the Shaikh used for his midday rest. A few other small rooms were built near the *jama'at-khana* to store grain for distribution to the people, and there was also a kitchen, where food was cooked for the poor and visitors.[6] The pillars and walls were made of mud and the roofs were covered with logs and earth. The building was uncomfortable for its occupants in all seasons. During the summer the hot Delhi winds roasted them; in the rainy season, cooling breezes were rare.[7] As the work of the *jama'at-khana* increased, so its buildings were expanded in a sprawling, unplanned way. Beds would be offered only to distinguished guests;

[1]For the biography of the Shaikh *see SA*, pp. 162-78; Jamali, pp. 59-91; *AA*, pp. 55-60; *A'in*, III, p. 170; *Gulshan-i Ibrahimi*, pp. 391-99; *Gulzar-i Abrar*, ff. 47a-50a; *Miratu'l-Asrar*, ff. 306a-18a; *Kalimat*, pp. 56-73; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, ff. 36a-48b.

[2]*SA*, p. 220-23.

[3]An alms house for the distribution of free food.

[4]*SA*, pp. 152-55; Jamali, pp. 90-1.

[5]*SA*, p. 154. However it has not survived.

[6]*SA*, pp. 238-41.

[7]*SA*, p. 388.

permanent members occupied places assigned to them on the floor. A day in the *jama'at-khana* was routinized and broken by prayers offered by the Shaikh in the Kilukhari mosque. He always walked to the mosque but towards the end of his life he reluctantly accepted the gift of a mare from a disciple who was a servant of Malik Yar Parran.[1] Old age also appears to have compelled him to use a palanquin. It seemed that a small house was built for the Shaikh near the mosque,[2] and other senior members of the order also appeared to have acquired small houses as personal residences in either Ghiyaspur or Kilukhari.

People considered Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din one of the most favourably endowed people alive, but he thought of himself as the most miserable. He saw his mission in this way:

> 'No one in the world is as sad and unhappy as I am. Huge numbers of people come to me and tell me of their misery and troubles. All this afflicts my heart and soul. Strange is the heart which listens to the sorrows of Muslim brethren and is not touched by it...The dervishes who retire to the mountains or jungles are free of these problems.'[3]

Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' ate little when it was time to break his fast, and again before dawn he ate sparingly when he began the day's fast. When pressed to eat more he would say, with tears in his eyes, that so many starving people slept in the corners of mosques and in the streets that these thoughts made it difficult for him to swallow food.[4]

Experience in dealing with all types of people endowed the Shaikh with a deep insight into human nature and his visitors were generally more than satisfied with his advice. In mystic language his inspired knowledge (*'ilm-i ladunni*) is recorded as greatly helping those who called on him. Even the 'ulama', notorious for their enmity towards sufis, were amazed at his discourse[5] for Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din was the master of the sufi method of instruction by the use of anecdotes.

The following story serves to give some insight into the great range of the Chishti saint's understanding. At one time, Amir Hasan's salary was withheld and he became most concerned for the future of his position. Having been informed of the situation, the Shaikh related to the Amir the story of a rich Brahman who had been cheated of his wealth and reduced to poverty. A friend of the Brahman met him in the street and inquired of his health. The newly pauperized Brahman astonished his friend by declaring that he was happy as he had not been deprived of his

[1] *KM*, p. 126.
[2] *KM*, p. 11; *SA*, p. 137.
[3] *KM*, p. 105.
[4] *SA*, p. 128.
[5] *SA*, pp. 129-30.

sacred thread.[1] Such a story served to remind Amir Hasan of the meaningless and transitory nature of the things of this world.[2]

According to the Shaikh, the first lesson of sufism was not related to prayers or organized rituals, but began with the mastery of the maxim: 'whatever you do not like to be done to yourself, do not wish it to happen to others; wish for yourself what you wish others also'.[3] A further anecdote quoted by the Shaikh depicts his belief that altruistic service to others is more meritorious than the performance of obligatory prayers. A dervish who went to Gujarat encountered a *majzub* (ecstatic), who was also an eminent sufi. One day the dervish went to a water tank. Although it was forbidden to take water from the tank, the guard allowed the dervish to perform his ablutions. Many women had come to carry water from the tank but were refused access to it. An old woman requested the dervish to fill her pot with water. He did so, and then performed the same service for other women waiting there, pot in hand. When he returned to the room with the *majzub*, the latter chastised him for calling him to prayers, and stated that the only really meritorious act was the filling of water pots for others.[4]

Laying great emphasis on renunciation, the Shaikh illustrated this by referring to a holyman who believed that prayers, fasting and supererogatory recitations were like a kettle, while the real thing was meat. He explained this allegory more fully by saying that meat was renunciation and such things as praying and fasting were supplementary. Firstly a man should renounce the world and not concern himself with anything appertaining to it. Prayers and fasting were of little concern, and a love of the world made them worthless. Defining renunciation the Shaikh depicted it as not wearing a loincloth in a state of asceticism for one should continue to wear clothing and also to eat, but rather as the distribution to the poor of anything surplus.[5]

The Shaikh was impressed by holy men of all religions who showed a common non-discriminatory attitude to the distribution of food. He related the story of Khwaja 'Ali, son of Khwaja Ruknu'd-Din Chishti, who had been arrested by the Mongols and taken to Chingiz Khan in chains. A Chishti disciple in the service of the Khan who was a witness began to devise arguments to gain the Khwaja's release. As Chingiz Khan was likely to remain unimpressed by expressions of the Shaikh's deep spiritualism and sanctity, the Chishti related that Khwaja 'Ali's father had been a constant magnanimous distributor of food to the poor. To Chinghiz Khan's query whether the recipients of such charity were those

[1] A cord of three threads worn over the left shoulder and under the right arm by Brahmans and other high caste Hindus.

[2] *FF*, p. 65.

[3] *FF*, p. 10.

[4] *FF*, p. 190.

[5] *FF*, p. 10.

from the sage's own community, the Khwaja answered that he had given to all, regardless of their origin. Chingiz Khan was so impressed that he released the sufi.[1]

Almost certainly Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din's *langar* was open to Hindus and Muslims alike. Although the Shaikh's main concern was an amelioration of the conditions of the Muslims, he also extended concern and care for Hindus. This can be seen from the following anecdote told by Amir Hasan. While in Devagiri, Hasan's servant bought a slave girl for five *tankas*. When they were to leave with the army for Delhi, the distraught parents begged to re-buy their daughter for twice the amount the servant had originally paid. Amir Hasan himself paid the sum and returned the girl to her family. Although she was a Hindu who had been possibly Islamized, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din approved of the Amir's action because of a precedent set by his teacher, Maulana 'Ala'u'd-Din Usuli. The Maulana had had a female slave who had been parted from her son in Katihar. Learning of her sorrow at the separation, the Maulana gave her some food and placed her on the road back to her home. Although he realized the 'ulama' disapproved of this policy, it greatly impressed Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din.[2]

To the Shaikh, Islam was not an empty round of prayers and rituals but a highly ethical code. He illustrated this with a story of Shaikh Bayazid Bastami and his Jewish neighbour. After Bayazid's death the Jew was asked why he had failed to embrace Islam. If by Islam was meant the path of Bayazid, answered the Jew, he would be unable to pursue such a difficult course; however, if they implied their own way, then he would be ashamed to follow it.[3]

A disciple visited Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' accompanied by a Hindu, and introduced him as his brother. The Shaikh asked the disciple if his brother was inclined towards Islam. The disciple replied that he had brought his friend to see the Shaikh so that the impact of the latter's personality might help him to accept the religion of the Prophet. But the Shaikh was overcome with sadness, and told his disciple that people remained untouched by preaching as only pious example would result in conversion.[4]

On another occasion, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din remarked that some Hindus had been convinced of the truth of Islam nevertheless they had refused to be converted.[5] Another conversation relating to Hinduism occurred when the Shaikh was strolling with Amir Khusraw on the roof of the *jama'at-khana* from where he sighted a group of Hindus at worship. Greatly impressed with their devotion, he remarked to the Amir: 'Every

[1] *FF*, p. 20.
[2] *FF*, pp. 215-16, 179-80.
[3] *FF*, p. 197.
[4] *FF*, p. 196.
[5] *FF*, p. 150.

community has its own path and faith, and its own way of worship.'[1]

Forbearance and peaceful relations between people were qualities which the Shaikh constantly taught. Control of the baser aspects of a man's life was to be vigorously pursued. The animal soul was *nafs* and the human soul was *qalb*. *Nafs* was responsible for all evil, whereas the *qalb* produced peace, resignation and good-will. If a person was dominated by *nafs*, and someone else controlled by *qalb*, the *nafs* was defeated. However, if both sides were dominated by *nafs* a confrontation would culminate in evil.[2]

Family responsibilities which produced a necessary involvement in worldly affairs were worthy and acceptable to the Shaikh, who fully realized that few could become totally dedicated ascetics. But he opposed those who accrued money in excess of their needs.[3] Those who supported their families were not really worldly, although they might appear so. Clothes were necessary to cover the body, but spare ones were not to be hoarded. However, indiscriminate charity was extravagant, only charity to please God had spiritual merit.[4]

The conversations of Nizamu'd-Din indicate that he was deeply concerned with the conflict between philosophy and theology. He believed the study of philosophy should be discouraged. This can be seen in one of his illustrations as follows.

A philosopher, carrying a bundle of books, approached a Caliph and proceeded to impress him with his discourse, at the same time hoping to mislead him intellectually and influence him against Islam. This situation caused deep concern to Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi, who believed that the Caliph might be converted to an anti-religious viewpoint with disastrous effects on the Islamic world. He immediately visited the Caliph and questioned him on his discussion with the philosopher. The Caliph reported to the Shaikh that the philosopher had told him that the motions of the heavens were of three kinds—natural, voluntary and involuntary. His argument was detailed this way. If a stone was thrown into the air it must fall to the ground, so such a motion was natural. A voluntary motion occurred due to free will. An involuntary motion was beyond the control of human beings. Based on such an argument, the motion of the heavens was natural, said the philosopher. Contradicting him, the Shaikh stressed the involuntary nature of the heavenly motions due to the miraculous activity of angels acting under divine command. He then proceeded to reveal to the philosopher and the Caliph the supernatural sight of angels moving the heavens.[5]

[1]Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus Gangohi, *Anwaru'l-'Uyun*, Urdu translation, Delhi, 1895, p. 4.
[2]*FF*, p. 138-39.
[3]*FF*, p. 145.
[4]*FF*, p. 214.
[5]*FF*, p. 58.

Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din's antipathy towards followers of the philosophical discipline is again revealed in this story:

Shaikh Abu Sa'id bin Abi'l Khair had a meeting with the philosopher, Avicenna. After leaving the Shaikh the philosopher asked a sufi friend to report what the Shaikh's views were of him. The Shaikh, however, said nothing. The sufi asked the Shaikh his opinion of Avicenna. The Shaikh replied that although he was a philosopher, physician and scholar, he did not have good manners. When Avicenna got the sufi's letter he wrote indignantly to Shaikh Abu Sa'id that, as he had written several books on ethics, his manners were beyond reproach. The Shaikh answered that he had not mentioned that the philosopher did not know about good manners, merely that he did not possess them.[1]

Although a celibate, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' loved children, and those who came to him were treated with care and affection. After his *'isha'*[2] prayers, members of his family and their children would often visit him. Another favourite relaxation of the Shaikh's was listening to his most beloved disciple, Amir Khusraw, who was also India's most famous Persian poet. Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din would say, 'What more, Oh Turk?', and Khusraw would continue talking.[3] Although he tired of others and of himself, the Shaikh was never weary of Amir Khusraw.[4] In praise of his disciple, Nizamu'd-Din composed this quatrain:

'There are few comparable to Khusraw in poetry and prose;
Khusraw is the monarch of this kingdom,
He is our Khusraw, not Nasir-i Khusraw;[5]
May God help my Khusraw.'

In his capacity as court poet, Khusraw served many Sultans, writing panegyrics to them and their exploits. Although not a *khalifa* of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya', important communications of the *khalifas* to their Shaikh were made through the sufi poet.

The poet and scholar disciples of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din

Of Turkic extraction, Amir Khusraw had been born into the Lachin tribe which originally inhabited the area near Balkh. Uprooted by the Mongol invasion, some members of the tribe had migrated to India. Among them was Amir Khusraw's father, Amir Saifu'd-Din Mahmud,

[1] *FF*, p. 204-05.
[2] Night prayers.
[3] *SA*, pp. 125-26.
[4] *SA*, pp. 201-02.
[5] Nasir-i Khusraw was an eminent philosopher and poet. He was born in 1004 in the province of Marw in Khusran, and died between 1072 and 1077. Among his works the *Safar Nama* (Account of His Travels) is a brilliant work. His rationalism and his Shi'ism naturally precipitated opposition from Sunnis.

referred to by the poet Saif-i Shamsi. He quickly rose to a distinguished position under Sultan Shamsu'd-Din Iltutmish and was paid handsomely. Settling in Patiali, in the Eta district, Amir Saifu'd-Din Mahmud married the daughter of 'Imadu'l-Mulk, another high official at the court of Iltutmish, who had been born in India. Of this union, Abu'l-Hasan Khusraw was born in 651/1253, the second of three male siblings. He obtained a good literary education, but his passion was for poetry which he started composing at eight. About the same time his father died. However, Khusraw continued his studies and the writing of poetry. 'Imadu'l-Mulk, his maternal grandfather, was associated with Ulugh Khan and after the latter's succession to the throne as Sultan Ghiyasu'd-Din Balban, was appointed Rawat-i 'Arz. In Amir Khusraw's words the post was 'one of the four props of the throne.'[1]

From his home environment, Khusraw learnt Persian, also some Turkic dialects, and Hindawi from the Hindu chiefs who would call on his grandfather. But he failed to develop a taste for Arabic.

About 671/1272–73, Khusraw's grandfather died and he joined the court of Malik Chajju 'Ala'u'd-Din Kishli Khan, Balban's nephew. During this period he composed verses in praise of several important officials and also sharpened his intellectual capacity and literary style. Two years later he entered the service of Balban's son, Bughra Khan, governor of Samana, and later that of Bughra's elder brother, the talented Prince Muhammad, and governor of Multan. In Multan, Khusraw encountered the Mongols and was, for a short time, imprisoned by them. But the brilliance of the Prince's court enabled the poet to match his wit and eloquence with many scholars and poets whom the court attracted. Khusraw served the Prince for five years, but in Zul'hijja 683/March 1285 the latter was killed by Mongols. His court poet wrote a haunting elegy to his death. Later Khusraw left Multan for Delhi. By the end of this period, he had compiled two collections of poems, his first *diwan, Tuhfatu's-Sighar* (Gifts of Childhood) was written in 671/1272–73 and the other was the *Wastu'l-Hayat* (Verses of the Middle of Life).

Amir Khusraw then moved to Awadh and became attached to the court of a wealthy noble and benefactor of the arts, Malik Amir 'Ali Sarjandar. But he felt called to Delhi, and at the invitation of Balban's successor, Mu'izzu'd-Din Kaiqubad, left Awadh for the capital. It was at the court of this sensuous monarch that Khusraw wrote his first long *masnawi*, the *Qiranu's-Sa'dain* (Conjunction of Two Auspicious Stars). The theme of this work is the encounter of Kaiqubad and his father, Bughra Khan, governor of Lakhnauti, who were both heading opposing armies against each other. It was completed in Ramazan 688/September-October 1289.

A great favourite of the Delhi Sultans, Amir Khusraw served them

[1] M.W. Mirza, *The life and works of Amir Khusrau*, Calcutta, 1935, p. 29.

and wrote eulogies in their praise, irrespective of the current court intrigues and political upheavals which continued throughout the various reigns.

On 20 Jumada II, 690/20 June 1291, Khusraw completed another *masnawi*, entitled the *Miftahu'l-Futuh* (Key to Success). This described Sultan Jalalu'd-Din Khalji's victory over the rebel governor, Malik Chajju of Kara, whom he himself had earlier served. Three years later he wrote his *diwan*, the *Ghurratu'l-Kamal* (Prime of Perfection) consisting of verses he had composed between 685/1286–87 and 693/1293–94. About that period he acquired the title *Tuti-i Hind* (Parrot of India), thus obtaining recognition of his ability as an eloquent poet and gifted raconteur.

In 711/1311-12 Khusraw wrote a history of 'Ala'u'd-Din's reign between 1296 and 1312 entitled the *Khaza'inu'l-Futuh* mainly concentrating on his military conquests. It was written in an ornate prose style, interspersed with verse. His masterpiece, written in the reign of 'Ala'u'd-Din, was the *'Ashiqa*, the love story of Prince Khizr Khan and Duwal Rani. This *masnawi* presents God as the creator of beauty and love. After praise of Muhammad, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din's spiritual qualities are detailed. The poet's patriotism, his love of Indian flora and fauna, customs and manners, also found a natural outlet in this poem. It was completed in Zu'lqa'da 715/February 1316, but another chapter was added in Sultan Ghiyasu'd-Din Tughluq's reign. About 716/1316–17, Khusraw completed his fourth *diwan*, the *Baqiya Naqiya* or Collection of Remaining Poems.

To 'Ala'u'd-Din, Amir Khusraw dedicated his five *masnawis*, the *Khamsa*. His mastery in romantic and historical poetry was excelled only by the celebrated Ilyas bin Yusuf Nizami Ganjwi.[1]

In Jamada I, 718/July 1318, Khusraw completed the *Nuh-Sipihr* (Nine Skies). It consisted of panegyrics to Mubarak Shah Khalji. It also described buildings constructed by him, praised India and the achievements of Hinduism in relation to metaphysics and linguistics, made mention of planets and to a host of other historical and sociological subjects. Copious praise heaped on Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' by his disciple tended to emphasize his belief that a *pir* was indispensable in the pursuit of a sufi path.

Khusraw's fifth and last *diwan*, the *Nihayatu'l-Kamal* (Highest Point of Perfection) was compiled by him sometime before his death. Another important literary contribution was the *Tughluq-Nama*, an account of the victory of Ghiyasu'd-Din Tughluq over Nasiru'd-Din Khusraw.

In 719/1319, Khusraw finally finished his voluminous *I'jaz-i Khusrawi* or *Rasa'ilu'l-I'jaz* (Miraculous Treatises). Featuring a large number of articles, treatises, copies of *farmans*, official and non-official documents, arranged earlier in his career, the work is divided into five books, four

[1] *See* Chapter Six.

of which were completed by 682/1283–84. An interesting document of Khusraw's early period is the *Fath-Nama* (Letter Announcing Victory) dealing with Balban's victory over the rebel governor, Tughril. As Khusraw was not officially ordered to write the *Fath-Nama*, it was therefore a private exercise, which was written in 680/1281-82.

Amir Khusraw summarizes nine different literary styles current in his own period in the following way:

1. The style of sufis and saints, which is of two kinds:

   (a) Of men of "gravity and stations," like that to be met with in *Kashfu'l-Mahjub*, *Suluku'l-Musafirin*, and other similar works;
   (b) Of men of States (*Ahl-i Hal*), like what we have in the works of (Ahmad) al-Ghazali or 'Ain-ul Quzat al-Hamadani.
2. The style of the research scholars (*'ulma'-i Muthaqqiq*) which is simple, forcible and convincing. Examples; the Persian books of (Abu Hamid) al-Ghazali and the Persian translation of the *Ihya'* by Majdu'd-Din Jajurmi.
3. The style of the epistle writers: neat and elegant, a mixture of Arabic and Persian judiciously worked up, the best specimen of which is provided by the translator of *Kalila-wa-Dimna* of Baha-i Baghdadi.
4. The style of scholars and savants: a technical language suited to each of the various sciences is employed.
5. The style of orators and lecturers. It may be 'plain' or 'coloured.'
6. The style of teachers, which is "like a slippery stone placed on the roadway by a clumsy workman—is avoided by the wise but causes many a fool to stumble." The lovers of this style are mostly obstinate and deaf to criticism of the wise.
7. The style of common folk. It is plain, simple and to the point.
8. The style of workers and craftsmen, suited to their various professions. It is free from all affectation or ornament.
9. The style of humorous writers, buffoons and clowns: a style particularly adapted for amusing and creating a sense of the droll and the ridiculous.'[1]

Khusraw's own style was unique and he carved a new path which he hoped his Indian literary successors would follow. He remained, however, inimitable. His dated documents in the *I'jaz-i Khusrawi* are few, but they fill very important gaps in our historical knowledge.

Some collections of Hindi or Hindawi verses are ascribed to Amir Khusraw. Their authenticity is doubted by a number of modern linguists. However, the Hindi words and phrases occurring in his Persian verses tend to indicate that this language came to his mind spontaneously, and he used it to achieve an effect. There may be some interpolations in

[1] *The life and works of Amir Khusrau*, pp. 216-17.

collections ascribed to him, for example in the *Khaliq-Bari*, but the sufi subject matter was of his own creation.

It is believed that Khusraw invented the musical instrument, the *sitar*, and several melodies for it by a mixture of Persian and Indian tunes. Popular Indian melodies such as *Qawl* are undoubtedly the invention of Amir Khusraw. They were designed to produce novelty in sufi *sama'* rituals, in which he himself participated.

Khusraw was prompted to write historical works in order to comply with requests from his patrons, but in reality he was uninterested in historiography, although his works provided indispensable information to later historians. To him the kaleidoscope of changes in the political world were merely manifestations of the divine will. The catastrophies befalling the Delhi Sultanate in a chain-like succession influenced him greatly and confirmed his belief in the inevitability of fate.[1] However, his perception of divine unity made him an optimist. Amir Khusraw believed that earthly love, expressed in allegorical and historical stories, was a bridge to spiritual love. On the occasions when he sought to imitate Nizami, and other masters of Persian poetry, he would present his work artistically and ingeniously.

As a *nadim* or 'boon companion' of Sultans, Khusraw made the court scenes of his rulers immortal. But his real dedication remained within the sufi movement, and on the completion of his official duties he would escape to Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya's *jama'at-khana*.

When the Shaikh died, Amir Khusraw was with Sultan Ghiyasu'd-Din Tughluq on his Bengal expedition. The news of his *pir's* death was a great blow. Hastening back to Delhi, he recited this verse by the grave:

> 'The beloved sleeps on her couch with her face covered with her curled lock,
> Oh Khusraw! Return to your own home for the entire world is now covered by night.'

The curled lock in sufi symbolism represents the divine mysteries and home is eternity. Khusraw was in fact predicting his own death, and he became so overwhelmed at his loss that he apparently was unable to weep for the Shaikh. Khusraw survived a further six months after the Shaikh's death, and died on 18 Shawwal 725/27 September 1325.[2]

Another eminent poet, also a disciple of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya',

[1]For a summary of the Hindi translation of Amir Khusraw's historical works mentioned above *see* S.A.A. Rizvi, *Adi Turk kalin Bharat*, Aligarh, 1956, and *Khalji kalin Bharat*, Aligarh, 1955.

[2]Other dates are 29 Zu'lqa'da 725/6 November 1325. Details of Amir Khusraw's life have been collected from his own works. An authoritative modern biography is Professor Wahid Mirza's, *The life and works of Amir Khusrau*. *See* also Mohammad Habib, *Hazrat Amir Khusrau of Delhi*, Bombay, 1927.

was Amir Najmu'd-Din Hasan Sijzi, the author of the *Fawa'idu'l-Fu'ad*. Born in Bada'un in 652/1254–55, he began writing poetry at the age of thirteen. While Amir Khusraw served at the courts of Balban's sons, Hasan was attached to the Sultan's court, employed as a writer of *qasidas*[1] in praise of his master. He excelled even his friend and fellow sufi, Khusraw, in writing *ghazals*, because of his effective and selective use of words and his incisive style.

Under the Khaljis, Amir Khusraw seems to have enjoyed greater prestige than Hasan. The latter was based in the military camp located some distance from the city.[2] Often the latter's salary was not received, and on one occasion his impecunious state prompted him to ask Shaikh Nazimu'd-Din if he could accept an unsolicited gift.[3]

It seems apparent that Amir Hasan became the disciple of the Shaikh sometime before 707/1307 and that he was then more than fifty-two. He recorded in a lucid Persian the discourses of his *pir*. So masterful was his literary style that Khusraw expressed a wish to exchange all his own works to be the author of Hasan's *Fawa'idu'l-Fu'ad*.

The intimacy between Hasan and the Shaikh was great and the Amir unburdened freely to him his problems, both spiritual and material. He confided that the performance of other than obligatory prayers was a burden for him, but that he took great comfort in *sama'*.[4] The Shaikh, advised him to devote more time to recitation of the Qur'an than to the writing of poetry.[5]

Hasan remained unmarried. He died at Daulatabad either in 737 or 738/1336 or 1337. During his lifetime, he came to be known as the Sa'di of India, a reference to the greatest of all Persian sufi poets. Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Chiragh made these comments on his *pir's* two disciples:

> Amir Khusraw and Amir Hasan tried their best to imitate Sa'di's style, but did not succeed. Khwaja Sa'di's poetry emanates from real spiritual experience.[6]

Other important 'ulama' and scholars also became disciples of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya'. One, Maulana Fasihu'd-Din was regarded during Balban's reign as a distinguished teacher and later he rejected his career to become the Shaikh's disciple.[7] The other noteworthy scholar

[1] An eulogistic poem. Elegies are also called *qasidas*.

[2] *FF*, p. 127.

[3] *FF*, p. 139.

[4] *FF*, pp. 127-28.

[5] *FF*, p. 261.

[6] *KM*, p. 143. For biographical notes on Amir Hasan *see SA*, p. 236; *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, p. 360; *AA*, pp. 101-03; *Gulzar-i Abrar*, ff. 84a-85a; *Mir'atu'l-Asrar*, ff. 374b-375b; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, ff. 141b-42b.

[7] *SA*, pp. 299-300.

among the Shaikh's disciples was Maulana Wajihu'd-Din Pa'ili.[1]

Perhaps the most interesting personality of all the Shaikh's disciples was Ziya'u'd-Din Barani, the author of the well-known *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*. Some of Barani's ancestors had served the Delhi Sultans from Balban to 'Ala'u'd-Din Khalji. He himself was a *nadim* (a boon companion) of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq. A friend of both Amir Hasan and Amir Khusraw, Barani differed from them by his overwhelming ambition, which initially achieved for him some political influence at Muhammad bin Tughluq's court. A *bonvivant* who lived extravagantly, he was endowed with a naive sense of his own intellectual and religious superiority. He urged the Sultans to reserve high office for only eminent Saiyids and Shaikhs. Hindus should be deprived of their wealth, Barani believed, and philosophers and non-Sunnis should be liquidated. His great personal ambition was frustrated during the reign of Sultan Firuz Shah. Barani's enemies had him disgraced, imprisoned and reduced to an impoverished state from which he was never to recover. He died some time after 1357.

Of Barani's works, *Hasrat Nama* was probably the most interesting study in sufism, unfortunately it has not survived. However, one available extract contains a conversation between the author and Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din. Barani posed the question why the Shaikh accepted disciples on an indiscriminate basis in contrast to other *pirs* who chose their followers with great care. The reply was as follows:

'God, in His great wisdom, has endowed every age with a peculiarity of its own. It creates in people of a certain era characteristics and habits which differ from other ages. The essence of discipleship is severance from everything that is not God or the contemplation of God. Previous teachers refused to accept a disciple unless he showed total detachment from all that was not godly. From the times of Shaikh Abu Sa'id (bin) Abi'l Khair to those of Shaikh Saifu'd-Din Bakharzi and Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi and Shaikh Faridu'd-Din (Baba Farid), large numbers of people began to throng the doors of sufi teachers. They belonged to all classes—rulers, noblemen, dignitaries and commoners, and they placed themselves under the protection of the sufi lovers of God who enrolled men of all classes to their discipleship. Regarding God's friends, no one can make generalizations and rules for the initiation of disciples and the basis of precedents cannot be framed. To your question of my alleged indiscrimination in the choice of disciples, my reply is that it has repeatedly been reported to me that my disciples refrain from indulging in sin, and offer congregational and non-obligatory prayers. If I impose on them difficult conditions, they would be deprived of even that level of piety. I accept what people say to me, and use no intermediaries, as a perfect saint (Baba Farid) has authorized me to initiate disciples. When Muslims beg to become my followers I accept

[1] *AA*, p. 99.

they have repented their sins, on the assumption that they are speaking the truth. The second reason for my accepting so many disciples is the fact that Shaikh Faridu'd-Din once gave me a pot of ink and ordered me to write amulets for the people. Finding me hesitant, he upbraided me saying that many would come to me for assistance and that I should refuse no-one.'[1]

The Khalifas of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din

Turning now to the *khalifas* or spiritual successors of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' of Delhi, we find that in 1325 they were all embroiled in an unprecedented crisis. In that year Muhammad bin Tughluq ascended to the Delhi Sultanate. An ambitious, educated ruler, he was filled with new ideas which he intended to implement and was able to do so in such an extensive, wealthy empire. Prompted by the defeat of Tarmashirin, the Chghta'i king of Transoxiana in the Ghazna region in 1326, Muhammad bin Tughluq planned the recruitment of a huge army which would annex the entire region west of the Indus with little opposition. At the very least he anticipated seizing Ghazna and Qandahar. The scheme, attempted in 1327, was beset with difficulties as the north Indian army was inexperienced at fighting so far west. Muhammad bin Tughluq attempted to gain support from the people by raising the slogan of *jihad* against the Mongols, who in previous years had devastated the Panjab and the region around Delhi, and also in order to mobilize the aid of the 'ulama' and the sufis. A large section of both groups, however, refused to be brought into the expansionist ambitions of the Sultan. Muhammad bin Tughluq retaliated by attempting to break their power by launching different schemes. Simultaneously with his scheme of military expansion in the west, the Sultan established a new capital, Daulatabad, in the Deccan, in an effort to maintain the subjugation of that area, a great distance from Delhi. He planned to transfer most of the 'ulama' and sufis of Delhi to Daulatabad, in order both to undermine their influence in Delhi and to populate the Deccan with a Muslim élite. But Muhammad bin Tughluq had made an error of judgement. Faced with a common threat, these two powerful groups joined forces in a combined enmity towards their ruler.

The compulsive nature of the migration of the Muslim élite aroused popular feeling against the government. The philosophers, whom both the 'ulama' and sufis had hitherto tried to suppress, rose to a new dominance in the government councils due to Muhammad bin Tughluq's developing interest in that discipline. Through their newly-found political

[1]*AA*, p. 100. Biographical references about Barani are available in the *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*. For a complete Hindi translation *see* S.A.A. Rizvi, *Adi Turk kalin Bharat*; *Khalji kalin Bharat*; *Tughluq kalin Bharat*, I, II. *See* also *SA*, pp. 346-47; *Mir'atu'l-Asrar*, pp. 369b-70a; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, pp. 131b-33a. *Kalimat*, pp. 138-41.

power the philosophers sought to further alienate the Sultan from the Delhi religious élite.

Chishti sources and other authorities, impressed with the accounts of both sufis and members of the 'ulama' group, have condemned the Sultan as irreligious and heretical. Modern authorities, such as Mahdi Husain[1] and Nizami,[2] believe that the Sultan's hostility to the mystics was influenced by the teachings of Maulana 'Abdu'l-'Aziz Ardbili, a disciple of the puritanical Hanbali reformer, Ibn Taymiyya (1263–1328). This theory is without foundation for the struggle between the sufis and the Sultan started at the beginning of his reign in 1325. The date of Ardbili's arrival at Muhammad bin Tughluq's court is unknown, but he was certainly absent from it during these early years, and probably reached India from Syria sometime after 1330 when the liberality of the Sultan towards Middle Eastern scholars was widely known. All independent sources affirm that the Sultan was a most religious man, who was deeply devoted to the descendants of Shaikh Hamidu'd-Din Nagauri and Baba Farid. He also built a number of tombs at the graves of eminent sufis and was not interested in implementing puritanical reforms of the kind recommended by Ibn Taymiyya. The Sultan was not hostile to the sufi movement *per se*, as has been represented, but was unprepared to tolerate opposition towards the implementation of his political policies. He encouraged the 'ulama' from other countries to migrate to India, and used these new-comers as a counter-balance to the 'ulama' and sufis of his own empire. Thus the activities of the *khalifas* of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' should be seen against such a background, rather than in the light of assumptions made by a number of medieval and modern scholars.

One of the most senior *khalifas* of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din was Qazi Muhi'u'd-Din Kashani. His ancestors were qazis from Awadh, and his grandfather, Qazi Qutbu'd-Din Kashani, had been most influential. Qazi Muhi'u'd-Din Kashani was also regarded as an eminent teacher. On becoming the Shaikh's disciple he tore up the *farman* of *idrar* or stipends granted him by the Sultans for his scholarship and exchanged them for the poverty of asceticism.

Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din held Muhi'u'd-Din in great respect and would stand to receive him. Others would await his arrival so that they might gain access to Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din and hear him speaking. Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din wrote Kashani's *khilafat-nama* with his own hand, adding the following:

> 'Lead the life of an ascetic; pay no attention to things of this world and its authorities. Do not accept gifts from rulers. When you have

[1]Mahdi Husain, *Tughluq Dynasty*, Calcutta, 1963, pp. 375-76.

[2]Mohammad Habib and K.A. Nizami, ed, *A comprehensive history of India*, Delhi, 1970, p. 495.

visitors and have nothing to offer them, consider this a great blessing and favour from Allah.'

On discovering the impecunious state of his family, Sultan 'Ala'u'd-Din Khalji sent a *farman* to Qazi Muhi'u'd-Din. It was generous, and included the grant of the post of the Qazi of Awadh, which had been held by his ancestors, as well as a number of villages. Muhi'u'd-Din consulted Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din on the desirability or otherwise of accepting the gift. The latter implied that he must have willed such a bequest to be given. Deeply distressed, the Shaikh remained estranged from his *khalifa* for about a year, but after that period they were apparently reconciled.

On one occasion, the Qazi asked Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' whether a disciple should contemplate God, the Prophet Muhammad and his *pir* separately, or the three simultaneously. The Shaikh said that both were possible but if he wished to contemplate the three at the same time, he should think that God was in front of him, the Prophet on his right and his *pir* on the left.[1]

Maulana Wajihu'd-Din Yusuf was another senior *khalifa* of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya'. Amir Khwurd relates a number of stories, including this one, in proof of his infinite devotion to his *pir*. An officer whom 'Ala'u'd-Din had sent to conquer Chanderi asked the Shaikh to send a disciple to accompany him to battle, to give him spiritual protection. Maulana Yusuf was assigned the task and after the war on the Shaikh's orders[2] he remained in Chanderi.

One of the most aged *khalifas* of the Shaikh was Maulana Shamsu'd-Din, son of Yahya. A native of Awadh, he migrated to Delhi to receive a higher education. He had no respect for sufism and studied *Usul al-Bazdawi*, a work on *Fiqh*, under Maulana Zahiru'd-Din, an *'alim* from Bhakkar. With his cousin, Maulana Sadru'd-Din, Shamsu'd-Din would wash clothes in the Jumna, near Ghiyaspur, where he could see the throngs of people at the *jama'at-khana* of Delhi's most celebrated sufi, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya'. Deciding to test the Shaikh's scholarship, they called at the *jama'at-khana* and immediately found themselves involuntarily prostrated on the ground before him. Informing him they were studying the *Usul al-Bazdawi*, the two young men presented to the Shaikh problems their teacher had been unable to solve. The Shaikh resolved those problems; in so doing he greatly impressed Shamsu'd-Din Yahya who became a disciple.

As a sufi, Maulana Shamsu'd-Din became so withdrawn from the world that he even refused to see people who called. His servant distributed gifts received by him. But his period at the *jama'at-khana* enhanced his reputation as a teacher and many eminent scholars would listen to him while seated at his feet. He became recognized as a great scholar among

[1] *SA*, pp. 294-96; *AA*, p. 98; *Miratu'l-Asrar*. ff. 365b-66a; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, ff. 126b-28a.
[2] *SA*, pp. 282-88.

Delhi's 'ulama,' and this association alienated Muhammad bin Tughluq. The Sultan ordered him to go to Kashmir and preach Islam in the temples there. A real confrontation between the two was avoided for the Shaikh developed a large boil on his chest which, though lanced, resulted in his death[1] a few days later.

Shaikh Qutbu'd-Din Munawwar was another important disciple of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya'. A grandson of Shaikh Jamalu'd-Din of Hansi, and the son of Shaikh Burhanu'd-Din, his childhood was spent in the highly mystical atmosphere of the *jama'at-khana*. On the occasion of receiving his *khilafat-nama*, Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Chiragh-i Dihli congratulated Qutbu'd-Din Munawwar and asked him to relate the secret instructions he had obtained. Shaikh Munawwar replied:

> 'The instructions of the *Sultanu'l-Masha'ikh*, which he discloses to different disciples, embody divine secrets. These are imparted by a *pir* and cannot be divulged to anyone. Those given to you are yours and those given to me are mine.'

Qutbu'd-Din was allowed to settle in Hansi and at the time of his departure, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din gave him the copy of the *'Awarifu'l-Ma'arif* which his grandfather had given the Shaikh to be passed on to his grandson. Shaikh Jamalu'd-Din had originally obtained it from Baba Farid at the time of receiving his *khilafat-nama*.

Along with other disciples of the great Chishti saint, Shaikh Munawwar was adversely presented to the Sultan by enemies of the sufi movement. The Sultan, according to Amir Khwurd, dispatched a *farman* of two villages to the Shaikh through Sadr-i Jahan Qazi Kamalu'd-Din, to test his asceticism. Quoting a precedent set by Baba Farid, the Shaikh requested the Qazi to admonish those who acted contrary to the traditions of their *pirs*. Chastened, the Qazi related to the Sultan Shaikh Munawwar's reply.

A further confrontation between Shaikh Munawwar and Muhammad bin Tughluq occurred during the latter's visit to Hansi. Before reaching the town he ordered it to be inspected. The report informed the Sultan that one of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din's disciples lived in Hansi, but did not anticipate paying homage in the traditional manner to his temporal ruler. Upon being summoned to attend the Sultan's court, the Shaikh thanked God for not being forced to visit the Sultan at his own bidding. Putting his prayer carpet on his shoulders, and carrying his stick, he left Hansi accompanied by his son, Nuru'd-Din. Although he continued to plead that he was a stranger to court etiquette, on the advice of Firuz, who later succeeded Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq, the Shaikh relented

[1]*SA*, pp. 222-28; *AA*, p. 97; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, ff. 129b-30a; *Tughluq kalin Bharat*, I, p. 144.

and was presented to the Sultan. It appears that the ruler was deeply impressed by the Shaikh's handshake, and mollified somewhat when he answered that he had failed to pay homage as he considered himself too unworthy to call on his rulers, adding that he had been occupied praying for the welfare of the Sultan and the Muslims in his solitary retreat. Admitting he had been misled regarding the Shaikh's character, the Sultan, through Firuz and Ziya'u'd-Din Barani, bestowed on him a gift of 100,000 *tankas*. On being pressed by them to accept the gift, the Shaikh consented only to receive 2,000 *tankas* which he gave in charity.

Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din, who will be discussed later, played a prominent role in the accession of Firuz Shah to the Delhi Sultanate, and was apparently a great source of inspiration to the army which marched from Thatta to Delhi. When it reached Sarsuti, about 300 kilometres from Delhi, Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din said to Sultan Firuz that his prayers had helped the army to reach Sarsuti, but from there onwards was the spiritual domain of Shaikh Qutbu'd-Din Munawwar and the Sultan should approach him for assistance.[1] Qutbu'd-Din replied to the royal petition as follows:

> 'As my brother, Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din has entrusted the care of the people to me, I pray God that Delhi may fall into your hands.'

On reaching Hansi, Sultan Firuz visited Shaikh Qutbu'd-Din Munawwar. Since the Shaikh was leaving for Friday prayers, he stopped outside his *jama'at-khana* and advised the Sultan both to stop drinking and refrain from continual indulgence in hunting, as the killing of animals should be necessitated only by human needs. When the Sultan asked the Shaikh to pray that his desire for this sport might be lessened the Shaikh became enraged and implied that his advice was not being genuinely heeded. The Sultan's gift of an expensive robe was refused.[2]

Shaikh Qutbu'd-Din's son, Shaikh Nuru'd-Din, who had accompanied him to the Sultan's court, rose to considerable eminence. When first entering the court of Muhammad bin Tughluq, the spectacle and pomp frightened him. But his father whispered to the child: 'Greatness and power belong to God alone.' His terror immediately abated, and he saw the assembly of great nobles as a collection of mere lambs.[3]

Among the many *khalifas* of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din can be listed Maulana Husamu'd-Din of Multan. A scholar who had mastered the *Hidaya*, he knew the *Ihya' al-'Ulum* of Ghazali and the *Qutu'l-Qulub* of

[1]Firuz's succession at Delhi was disputed by the powerful vizier, Khwaja-i Jahan Ahmad bin Iyaz, who had placed on the throne a son of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq. The combined support of the sufis, the 'ulama' and the military enabled Firuz to triumphantly enter the capital on 25 August 1351.

[2]*SA*, pp. 247-56; *AA*, pp. 87-9; *Gulzar-i Abrar*, ff. 56a-b; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, ff. 116b-18b.

[3]*AA*, p. 89.

Abu Talib Makki in great detail. He made a pilgrimage to Mecca and on his return stayed in the Kilukhari mosque. Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din learnt of his arrival, and sent him his prayer carpet, indicating that he should be visited immediately. At their meeting, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din, knowing that the Maulana had made a pilgrimage to Mecca, told him that it was worthwhile to make two pilgrimages, one for the *hajj* and the other to visit the tomb of the Prophet, rather than combining the two purposes. The remark prompted the Maulana to make a further pilgrimage to Medina, which he began the day after the conversation.

Husamu'd-Din Multani lived in a thatched hut without servants. He was married and had a family. Considering himself merely a humble *mulla*, he felt he was unworthy to use the title of Shaikh. On his initiation as one of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din's *khalifas* the Maulana requested his *pir's* permission to leave Delhi and withdraw to a lonely place by the river. The Shaikh, however, replied that he would become too famous if he did this, and people would flock to see him. To his disciple's question regarding the efficacy of accepting loans while awaiting *futuhs*, the Shaikh answered that the only two pretexts on which loans could be accepted were the maintenance of one's family and the entertainment of travellers. He added, however, the loan seeking and repayment disturbed the spiritual routine of a dervish and that a true ascetic should be totally unconcerned with financial matters. Begging should not be pursued by a dervish and Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' listed two ways of seeking alms, both he believed to be unworthy of an ascetic, particularly the second. The first was begging from door to door, the second involved a withdrawal from the world but a continued mental occupation with the attainment of gifts.

On an occasion when Maulana Husamu'd-Din of Multan asked his *pir* what course should be pursued when requested to perform miracles, the Shaikh's reply was concise: 'A miracle means that one remains steadfast at God's door. If you remain firm on your path, why do you seek miracles?'

The *Khairu'l-Majalis* featured a detailed account of some of the teachings of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din to his eminent disciples, amongst whom was Maulana Husamud-Din Multani. Maulana Jamalu'd-Din Nusratkhani and Maulana Sharafu'd-Din were in the company of the Shaikh when he leaned towards Maulana Husamu'd-Din and stated: 'If one fasts all day and prays the entire night, he does the same as a widow; concentration on God which has enabled holymen to reach Him is something else altogether.' He refused to explain further, but promised to do so on another occasion. About six months later, Maulana Hasamu'd-Din and the above-mentioned sufis were gathered around their *pir*. At that time Muhammad Katib, a *hajib*, or a chamberlain, of Sultan 'Ala'u'd-Din Khalji and also a disciple, came to the Shaikh, kissed the ground before him and sat down. Afterwards the chamberlain informed

the Shaikh that he himself was a member of the court and that the Sultan had distributed large sums of money to the poor. The Shaikh questioned his disciples on the superior nature of either the Sultan's charity to his people or the fulfilment of a promise, and they all agreed on the latter. Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din then related six conditions which produced a concentration on God, making it possible for a sufi to realize his goal.

1. One should retire to a lonely cell and leave it for neither company nor change.
2. One should always exist in a state of performing *wuzu* (ablutions). One may sleep when necessary but on rising immediately perform *wuzu* again.
3. Perpetual fasting should be observed.
4. With the exception of *zikr*, constant silence should be practised.
5. *Zikr* should be continually recited at the same time as a recollection in the heart of the presence of one's *pir*.
6. One should expel every thought except that of God.[1]

In 1327, along with other 'ulama' and sufis, Maulana Husamu'd-Din was selected by Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq for transference to Daulatabad, and from there he left for Gujarat where he died.[2]

The circumstances under which Maulana Fakhru'd-Din Zarradi became associated with Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din are reminiscent of those connected with Maulana Shamsu'd-Din Yahya. Fakhru'd-Din was a native of Samana and migrated to Delhi to further his education. He became a student of Maulana Fakhru'd-Din of Hansi who taught him the *Hidaya*, a work on Sunni jurisprudence. Like other students preparing to become *'alims*, Fakhru'd-Din Zarradi had little faith in sufism and spoke disparagingly of the Chishti sage, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya'. Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din, a class-mate of Zarradi, and a disciple of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din, persuaded him to visit the great Shaikh. After an intellectual discussion involving difficulties associated with the *Hidaya* which his teacher, Maulana Fakhru'd-Din, had failed to clarify, Zarradi was awed by the ease with which Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' dealt with the problems. Although engaged to be married, Maulana Fakhru'd-Din Zarradi shaved his head, adopted celibacy and became a follower of the Shaikh.[3]

The Maulana rented a house in front of the *jama'at-khana* where he was close to his *pir*. Although most of his time was spent in prayer, Maulana Zarradi's fame as a scholar spread to Baghdad. When Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din died, he retired to the banks of the Jamna, near a place where Firuz Shah was to build a palace. He later moved to the

[1] *KM*, pp. 68-9.
[2] *SA*, pp. 257-62; *AA*, pp. 89-91; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, ff. 118b-20a.
[3] *KM*, pp. 63-5.

Hauz-i Khass side of the river, but much of his time was spent travelling to the tombs of his spiritual ancestors in Ajmer and Ajodhan. When in Delhi he dwelt in the hills surrounding the city.

The following is an account of the conflict between Maulana Zarradi and Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq, from the *Siyaru'l-Auliya'*.

In the days when Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq was sending people from Delhi to Daulatabad (1326–27) and he intended to seize Turkistan and Khurasan and liquidate the descendants of Chingiz Khan, he summoned all the *sadrs* (religious dignitaries) and other distinguished residents of Delhi and its environs to the court. He ordered splendid *bargahs* (tents) to be erected and to place in them pulpits so that he himself might prompt people to *jihad*. The Sultan summoned Maulana Fakhru'd-Din Zarradi, Maulana Shamsu'd-Din Yahya and Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Mahmud Chiragh-i Dihli. Shaikh Qutbu'd-Din Dabir, a disciple of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' and a student of Maulana Zarradi arranged it so that the Maulana could meet the Sultan before the arrival of the others. The Maulana did not wish to see the Sultan as he used to say that he could see his head rolling before the court. He was determined not to compromise, and believed that death was imminent. When the Maulana saw the Sultan, Shaikh Qutbu'd-Din took the former's shoes, put them under his arms and stood behind him in the manner of a servant. The Sultan sought the Maulana's cooperation in his scheme of annihilating the descendants of Chingiz. The Maulana said 'God willing.' The Sultan replied: 'These words express doubt.' The Maulana said: 'Only these words are used for actions relating to the future.' The Sultan was annoyed, but asked the Maulana to counsel him. The Maulana answered: 'Suppress your anger.' The Sultan asked what was meant by anger. The Maulana replied that beastly anger and signs of ferocity were apparent from the Sultan's forehead. The Sultan, however, remained silent. He ordered the meals to be served. Both the Sultan and the Maulana began to eat from the same plate but it was clear that the Maulana did not like to eat with his ruler. To increase the Maulana's resentment, the Sultan kept serving him meat which he was unwilling to eat. After the meal was over, Maulana Shamsu'd-Din Yahya and Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din were summoned. On the departure of all three the Sultan offered each a woollen garment and a purse of *tankas*. Maulana Shamsu'd-Din and Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din took the gifts and departed. Shaikh Qutbu'd-Din Dabir knew Maulana Zarradi would not accept the gifts, so he himself took them and the meeting concluded peacefully. The Sultan became indignant at Shaikh Qutbu'd-Din's behaviour but the latter replied that Maulana Zarradi was his teacher and his preceptor's *khalifa*, therefore it was in keeping for him to carry the Maulana's shoes on his head. The Sultan ordered him to give up such blasphemous beliefs or he would be killed, but Shaikh Qutbu'd-Din did not falter from his duty of service to his teachers. Ikhtisan Dabir and men like him would involve Shaikh

Qutbu'd-Din Dabir in discussion in order to harass him, but he always repayed them in the same manner.

The dangers of being a sufi unwilling to bend to the whims of his temporal lord continued for Fakhru'd-Din Zarradi even after he finally moved to Daulatabad about 1327. There his keen desire to undertake a pilgrimage to Mecca became overwhelming. He discussed his proposed journey with the Sadr-i Jahan Qazi Kamalu'd-Din, who was both a relative and a former fellow student. The Qazi advised him of the dangers of embarking on a *hajj* without the permission of Muhammad bin Tughluq who was unlikely to permit it as he had ordained that all leading sufis and 'ulama' remain in Daulatabad. Amir Khwurd's father, however, advised him to keep his plan secret. Maulana Fakhru'd-Din achieved his ambition to go to Mecca after visiting Pethwan for his nephew's wedding. On the journey from Mecca he visited Baghdad where he received a warm reception from its holymen. He remained there for some time and continued the study of *Hadis*, becoming the acknowledged authority in that field. On the return journey to Daulatabad his ship, overloaded with pilgrims, sank and Maulana Fakhru'd-Din was drowned.[1]

Another of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din's *khalifas* was Maulana 'Ala'u'd-Din Nili who came from Awadh. An eloquent speaker and an impressive reciter of the Qur'an, he was allowed to enrol disciples, but found the associated responsibilities too onerous. Towards the end of his life, most of his time was spent reading the *Fawai'du'l-Fu'ad* which he himself had transcribed.[2]

Maulana Burhanu'd-Din Gharib, another *khalifa*, invented a peculiar style of dancing which was performed during the ritual of *sama'*. This came to be known as the Burhani. When aged over ninety, Burhanu'd-Din acquired a habit of sitting on a folded blanket. 'Ali Zambili and Malik Nusrat, favourites of Sultan 'Ala'u'd-Din Khalji and also disciples of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din, reported to the Shaikh that Burhanu'd-Din Gharib had started sitting on cushions like a great Shaikh. This so incensed Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din that he expelled him from the *jama'at-khana* which meant that none of the Shaikh's disciples were able to offer him lodging. The Maulana's distressed condition aroused the compassion of other disciples and by their intercession he was restored to the Shaikh's favour. Maulana Burhanu'd-Din was also forced to leave Delhi for Daulatabad. There, according to 'Isami, he became extremely well-known.[3] Sultan Nasir Khan Faruqi (1399–1437), the ruler of the Faruqi dynasty of Khandesh (1382–1601) built a town which he called Burhanpur at the suggestion of Shaikh Zainu'd-Din, a *khalifa* of Burhanu'd-Din's. The Sultan made Burhanpur his capital and also built another town,

[1] *SA*, pp. 262-75; *Gulzar-i Abrar*, ff. 65a-b; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, ff. 120a-b.
[2] *SA*, pp. 275-78; *Mir'atu'l Asrar*, f. 358b.
[3] *Futuhu's-Salatin*, pp. 457-58.

Zainabad, named after Shaikh Zainu'd-Din.[1]

One of the *khalifas* of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din who laid a firm foundation of the Chishti order in Bengal was Shaikh Akhi Siraju'd-Din 'Usman. Lakhnauti was his home town but he first migrated to Awadh, then to Delhi. When he first arrived in Delhi, Akhi did not have a hair on his face, so much of his adolescence was spent in the spiritual atmosphere of the *jama'at-khana* of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya'. Some sheets of paper and a few elementary books were the only possessions of the young Akhi. Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din was reluctant to make him his *khalifa* because of his poor literary education. This appears to have been rectified to some degree by the labours of Maulana Fakhru'd-Din Zarradi who wrote him short treatises on Arabic grammar, and also through the efforts of other scholars. By the time he attained old age, Akhi Siraju'd-Din 'Usman had received more than an adequate education.

In 1327, Shaikh Akhi left Delhi for Lakhnauti, taking with him some books from the great Shaikh's library. The rulers and Muslim élite of Bengal became his disciples. Before he died he buried some of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din's clothes which he had carried from Delhi, and requested that he be buried next to the clothing.[2]

The most prominent of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din's *khalifas* and his chief successor in Delhi, however, was Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Mahmud who became known as the Chiragh or Lamp of Delhi. His home town was Awadh and he was born in about 675/1276–77. Shaikh Yahya, his father, was a wool merchant and had lived in great affluence. When his father died he was nine. His mother continued to have him educated as an *'alim*, but temperamentally he was more attracted to asceticism.

By the time he was twenty-five, Nasiru'd-Din Mahmud had abandoned the world and embraced the life of a sufi with its daily rituals of self-mortification, fasting and prayers. Leaves growing wild in Awadh, known as *sanbhalu*, served to break his fast and to also kill his sexual desires. He lived alone except for a few fellow dervishes. Early in the morning he would leave his dwelling in Awadh and walk to the local mango grove which also held some tombs. There he spent the whole day in prayer. A small group of Muslim weavers worked in the grove and with Nasiru'd-Din they would gather in congregation under the trees to pray while he acted as their Imam.[3]

A number of Awadh's most noted scholars and holymen were the disciples of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' of Delhi. This prompted Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Mahmud at the age of forty-three to migrate to Delhi to join the ranks of Chishti saints. He had by then completed

[1]*Futuhu's-Salatin*, pp. 461-62; *Gulshan-i Ibrahimi*, p. 279; *SA*, p. 278-81; *Mir'atu'l-Asrar*, ff. 359b-61b; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, f. 135a.

[2]*SA*, pp. 288-90; *AA*, pp. 86-7; *Gulzar-i Abrar*, ff. 61a; *Mir'atu'l-Asrar*, ff. 363a-65b; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, ff. 115b-16b.

[3]*KM*, pp. 170-71.

eighteen years of strenuous mystical exercises, under the tutelage of local dervishes. So advanced spiritually was he that it was natural he would outshine many of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din's other disciples. Greeted warmly by the Shaikh, he was later initiated as a disciple.

Long periods of self mortification in the wilderness had made Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din unaccustomed to urban living. He asked Amir Khusraw, through whom requests to Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din were made, to obtain the latter's permission to retire to the jungles and mountains. But his *pir* had charted for him a different course, and the message was relayed that Nasiru'd-Din must remain in Delhi among the people, and suffer whatever indignities and hardships they might inflict on him. In return he must treat them with generosity and love. Amir Khwurd commented:

> 'The Sultanu'l-Mashai'kh entrusted everyone with duties which he found him fit to perform. To one he ordered to remain silent, and behind doors. To another he ordered to enrol a large number of disciples. To a third he would order that he live amongst the people, accept the suffering they may cause, and remain courteous to them.'

While living in the *jama'at-khana*, Nasiru'd-Din's fellow dervishes named him Ganj, the Treasury, implying that he was a source of spiritual bounty. According to Amir Khwurd, after his accession Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq began to harass Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Mahmud while the latter patiently endured his slights. However, Amir Khwurd fails to give details in support of his accusations. As previously mentioned, the Shaikh, with Shamsu'd-Din Yahya and Fakhru'd-Din Zarradi, had been sought by the Sultan to assist him in his policy regarding the extermination of Mongols from Ghazni and Khurasan. However, Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din appears to have escaped enforced migration to Daulatabad, and remained in Delhi.

However it would seem that Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din and other eminent Chishti sufis were compelled to accept government posts. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq depicts the Sultan as forcing Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din to accompany him on his travels, and relates that on another occasion he was appointed his *jamadar*.[1] But, following the teachings of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya', the Shaikh appears to have reluctantly accepted the duties assigned to him in a spirit of self denial.

The power of the 'ulama' and the sufi orders which the Sultan resented so strongly paled into insignificance in contrast with the spate of rebellions against the Delhi Sultanate beginning only a year after his accession. These had assumed serious proportions as region after region overthrew the Sultan's provincial governments and seized independence. The popular slogan, 'down with the tyrant' (*zalim*), became a catch phrase

[1] A servant who presents clothes to his master.

and ambitious adventurers raised rebel standards. Many members of the 'ulama' and sufis, long-time enemies of Muhammad bin Tughluq, became their supporters.

Between 1348 and 1350, the Sultan was engrossed in suppressing Taghi's rebellion in the Gujarat region. After the failure of the insurrection, Taghi managed to escape to Thatta. By the middle of 1349, Muhammad bin Tughluq's rule had been restored in Gujarat and Kachch, and the Sultan had departed in pursuit of Taghi. He passed through Gondal, in Kathiawar, where he summoned some important nobles, sufis and '*ulama*' from Delhi. Among them were the Sultan's cousin, Firuz, and Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din. According to Mulla 'Abdu'l-Qadir Bada'uni, Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din had installed Firuz on the throne.[1] The Shaikh, however, was uninterested in politics, but rumours of a rebellion in the capital must have been widespread at the time implicating the Shaikh and Firuz in the alleged uprisings. Both were summoned to Muhammad bin Tughluq's court as a precautionary measure, but before they could arrive, he had died at Sonda near Thatta in March 1351. An army of Mongols, had, in the meantime, arrived from Transoxiana to aid the Sultan against the rebels. Its leaders decided to take advantage of the power vacuum created by the interregnum to attack the leaderless Delhi army which had begun to disperse. In an effort to save the army from attack and northern India from a possible establishment of Mongol rule, leaders of the 'ulama', sufis and prominent former officers of Muhammad bin Tughluq, made their forty-six year old favourite, Firuz, Sultan. Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din, one of the leading king-makers, entreated the new Sultan to rule with justice, and in turn received a promise to that effect.[2] As mentioned earlier, Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din claimed that the imperial army reached Sarsuti safely because of his own prayers.

After his involvement in imperial politics in order to prevent a catastrophe, Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din returned to his quiet life at his *jama'at-khana*. Sultan Firuz did not forget the sufis and showered gifts on their khanqahs which resulted in the usual strains associated with material prosperity. The *jama'at-khana* of the Sultanu'l-Masha'ikh remained firmly entrenched in its traditions of poverty and austerity. Untouched by material wealth, Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din was also unaffected by political power. When Sultan Firuz called to see him he was kept waiting for some time, and no special treatment was given.

One day in 1353 Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din had retired to his room for contemplation. There was no-one at the door of the *jama'at-khana*, and his nephew, Shaikh Zainu'd-Din 'Ali, who generally attended him, was absent. A qalandar, named Turab, entered the room and inflicted eleven knife wounds on the Shaikh's body. The bleeding was so profuse that it flowed into a drain in his cell. While being stabbed, the Shaikh

[1] *Muntakhabu't-Tawarikh*, I, Calcutta, 1868, p. 242.

[2] Shams Siraj Afif, *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, Calcutta, 1890, pp. 61-2.

did not utter a sound. His disciples, on rushing into the room, were restrained by Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din from attacking the qalandar. The Shaikh paid Turab twenty silver *tankas* and sought his forgiveness lest the latter had suffered some injury while wielding his knife. The high government officials and Sultan Firuz were unable to punish the assailant due to the insistence of his victim. Turab was able to leave Delhi unmolested, even by a mob infuriated by the attack on the city's beloved Shaikh.

Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Mahmud, the Lamp of Delhi, lived a further three years. Prayers, fasting and vigils failed to undermine his routine of instruction to his senior disciples and care of the poor. Although generally exhausted from long hours of teaching and mortification, he continued to be strenuously active until a few days before his death on 18 Ramazan 757/14 September 1356.

Although Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din had a large number of disciples, he considered none worthy of receiving the relics bequeathed to him from Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya'. In accordance with his will, these were buried with his earthly remains. The *khirqa* was placed on his rib bones, the staff was laid beside his body, his rosary was wound around his forefinger, the wooden bowl was placed under his head and the wooden sandals on his breast. Saiyed Muhammad Gisu Daraz, who will be mentioned again in Chapter Four, washed his master's body. Then, taking some cords from the Shaikh's matted bed, his disciple wound them around his head, declaring that for himself such cords made the best *khirqa*.

Through Zainu'd-Din, Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din left this message for his disciples:

> 'Tell them, they have to bear the burden of their own faith,
> there is no question of bearing the burden of others.'[1]

The tomb of Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Mahmud became a beacon for succeeding generations and the area came to be known as the Chiragh-i Dihli. A tomb was built by Sultan Firuz on the grave but the existing enclosures and mosque were erected by the Mughal Emperor Muhammad Shah (1719–48) between 1142 and 1143/1729 and 1730. Other additions were made by later Mughal princes. The whole area is associated with the memories and traditions of a large number of sufis and saints, many of whom lie buried there.

The teachings of Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din embodied in the *Khairu'l-Majalis* represented a peak in Chishti philosophy which had evolved in India during the course of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

[1] *Tughluq kalin Bharat*, II, p. 59; Barani, *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, pp. 525-26; *KM*, pp. 282-87. For the biography of the Shaikh *see SA*, pp. 238-47; Jamali, pp. 92-7; *AA*, pp. 80-6; *A'in*, p. 172; *Gulshan-i Ibrahimi*, pp. 298-400; *Gulzar-i Abrar*, ff. 69a-71a; *Mir'atu'l-Asrar*, ff. 347b-56b; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, ff. 48b-56a.

Following the traditions of his spiritual ancestors, he emphasized both the necessity to associate with common people and a simultaneous withdrawal from them. In the *Khairu'l-Majalis* Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din specified the meanings of two words that were anathema to a dervish. Firstly there was a *muqallid*, or sufi without a *pir*, secondly, was the *jarrat*, a person who donned an excellent *khirqa* and the cap of a sufi and who visiting the sultans and his officials, begged for money. Such a person was a *jarrat* because he sold religion. Common people were forced to go to a bazaar and sell their goods but a spiritualist should not ask for anything from others. He should bolt his door and pray for his spiritual and material needs which come from God.[1] The *sine qua non* of a sufi life was the belief that 'the Beloved (God) is for us and our life is for the Beloved.'[2] The highest form of penitence was the severance of all relations from everything but God.[3]

There were two kinds of fetters, the Shaikh continued during one discourse. One related to the *Shari'a* and the other to the self. The first shackle was the family, and the second, sensuality. Love of God drove away all thoughts of the family.[4] The Prophet Muhammad chose the life of a dervish rather than remaining affluent.[5] True comfort was to be found in the house of a dervish, there was only grief in the house of a wealthy man. The lamentations in a dervish's dwelling was only for the love of God; nevertheless it was a source of satisfaction and contentment to them.[6]

A sufi should perform continual self-mortification of a very severe type, believed Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din. The sufi should eat, sleep and talk while remaining as withdrawn from people as possible. An initiate should place great stress on the use of his time to its greatest value. He should read the Qur'an, pray, recite *zikr* and contemplate.[7] If a dervish went to bed hungry, got up in the earliest part of the morning and meditated, he would experience divine light in his soul.

The essence of sufi discipline was control of the breath and this should be practised during meditation. Every breath was related to the mystic state. As long as he controlled his breath,[8] his thoughts were not diffused and his time was not ill-used. In the beginning breath control was a deliberate action, later it became automatic. A sufi was one whose breaths were counted and the perfect sufi was a *sahib-i anfas* (the master

[1]*KM*, p. 80.
[2]*KM*, pp. 41-2.
[3]*KM*, p. 25.
[4]*KM*, p. 97.
[5]*KM*, p. 102.
[6]*KM*, p. 103.
[7]*KM*, p. 109.
[8]Although *nafs* means lower self, *nafas* means breath. The Shaikh himself translated *nafas* as *dam* but Nizami, reluctant to give any credit to Siddhas, deliberately reads *nafs* in the sense of the lower self. Introduction to the *Khairu'l-Majalis*, p. 24.

of articulated breath). The breaths of faultless yogis, known as *Siddhas* were also measured. A dervish related he had learnt concentration from a cat by watching it sit before a rat hole in such a way that it had full control over its breathing so that not a single whisker moved.[1]

Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Mahmud advocated that the government service was not necessarily an obstacle to contemplation and meditation. He quoted the following verse in support of his belief:

> 'The essence of sufism is not an external garment.
> Gird up your loins to serve the Sultan and be a sufi.'

Conversations of the Shaikh's tend to give the impression that the reign of Sultan 'Ala'u'd-Din was an ideal one for the people of Delhi. It would appear that prices were cheap and, according to an anecdote related by the Shaikh, this was precipitated by philanthropic reasons. The people of Delhi were reassured during political upheavals by the presence of the sufi orders and their khanqahs to which they had constant access. They would visit the tomb of Sultan 'Ala'u'd-Din Khalji, and tie threads and pieces of cloth around it so that their prayers and wishes might be granted. There were a large number of *langars*; the people organized many public entertainments at little expense. Rituals involving religious music and dancing were often held around the tombs and gardens of the Shaikhs, and the use of *sama'* was at its peak.[2]

Large gifts from Sultan Firuz to the Chishti order restored the glory of many khanqahs. But the vitality of Delhi's spiritual life, as it had been during the time of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din, was fast vanishing. Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din commented that the art of sufi teaching had degenerated into child's play, that is, something not to be taken seriously. His successors and some other disciples of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' wisely decided to carve Chishti centres in the provinces of the empire, rather than remain in the capital.

The popularity of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' had tended to give the impression that a parallel spiritual empire existed in Delhi beside the temporal one, although this of course was alien to Chishti teaching. In reality the sufi spirit worked more successfully remote from centres of political power.

The view that Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq broke the central Chishti organization is incompatible with the spirit of the *silsila* which had been set up by Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din and Baba Farid. After the death of the Sultan, people asked Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din the reasons for the Sultan's persecution. He replied:

> 'There was something between me and God the most High which was settled in that way.'[3]

[1]*KM*, pp. 59-60. [2]*KM*, pp. 241-43. [3]*SA*, p. 246.

Chapter Three

The Suhrawardiyya and the Firdawsiyya *Silsilas*

THE Indian soil was enriched by the migration from Iran and Transoxiana of a number of disciples of Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi. The real founders of the Suhrawardiyya order in India, however, were Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya and Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din Tabrizi.

The ancestors of the parents of Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya seem to have come to Sind with the army of Muhammad bin Qasim.[1] Baha'u'd-Din was born at Kot Karor, near Multan, about 578/1182–83. His father died when he was twelve years old. He memorized the Qur'an and then went to Khurasan for further studies. He remained there for seven years, and left for Bukhara, where his piety earned him the title 'Angel.' After performing a *hajj* to Mecca, he went to Medina where for five years he studied *Hadis* under Maulana Kamalu'd-Din Muhammad, the greatest scholar of that discipline in his days. From there he went to Jerusalem and later to Baghdad, where Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi initiated him into his order and made him his *khalifa*.[2]

The training period of Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din lasted for only seventeen days. The Shaikh's other disciples, many of whom had spent years serving him, were annoyed at an Indian being elevated to a high status in such a short time. After Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din learnt of their dissatisfaction he told them that when they had first come to him they had been like green wood which would not catch fire, whereas Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din had been like dry wood, which had begun to burn with a single breath.[3]

Leaving Baghdad, Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din reached Multan, via Nishapur. His arrival was a source of consternation to the town's holymen and religious dignitaries and they requested him to settle elsewhere. They expressed their wish through a symbolic act. Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din was sent a cup full of milk, pointing out that the town was as full of scholars as the cup of milk and had no room for others. The Shaikh understood the significance of their action and, placing a rose on the milk, returned the

[1]Ibn Battuta, *Voyages D'Ibn Batoutah*, III, Paris, p. 102. Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din, a grandson of Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya, himself made this statement about his ancestry to Ibn Battuta, however, it is not necessarily authentic.

[2]Jamali, pp. 103-04.

[3]*FF*, pp. 49-50.

cup. Such a gesture implied that he would occupy the same place among the scholars and holymen of Multan as the rose in the milk.[1]

The 'ulama' also did not appreciate the presence of Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din and soon a conflict arose between him and Maulana Qutbu'd-Din Kashani. Nasiru'd-Din Qubacha, the ruler of Multan, held the Maulana in great respect and built a *madrasa* where he lectured and performed his daily prayers. The Maulana had no faith in sufis, and believed that when a student at Kashghar, he had seen the most outstanding sufi of all. The sufi was an ironsmith who made knives. Although he miraculously mended a broken knife of the Maulana, what seems to have impressed him most was the fact that the sufi was usefully employed. As no other mystic was like the ironsmith, the Maulana advocated that it was unnecessary to believe in the sufi movement itself.[2] Under such circumstances, a conflict between these two leading personalities became inevitable. The Maulana tried to dissuade Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya from going to the *madrasa* for morning prayers on the pretext that it was too far for him to travel from his *khanqah*.

The clash finally came over a legal point relating to *namaz* (obligatory prayers). The Shaikh defended his action on the basis of his inner light (*nur-i batin*). The Maulana rejected the Shaikh's defence arguing that an inner light which was incompatible with *Shari'a* was in fact darkness. Their differences were insurmountable and the Shaikh left the debate, vowing never to return to the *madrasa*.[3]

Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din's reputation as a scholar, and the distinctive place he acquired among the disciples of Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi, soon made him an important figure in Multan. It appears that merchants from Iraq and Khurasan were attracted to him in large numbers. The Shaikh erected an extensive *khanqah* containing granaries. However it was not a meeting place for the common people; only eminent religious people and perhaps state dignitaries and wealthy merchants were admitted. The Shaikh discussed with them topical theological and spiritual problems and in his own estimation they all benefited from his company.[4]

The Shaikh openly sided with Sultan Shamsu'd-Din Iltutmish when he wished to add Multan and Sind to the Delhi Sultanate. The invasion of Chingiz had already weakened Qubacha and the Shaikh did not hesitate to write to Sultan Shamsu'd-Din inviting him to conquer Multan. The Qazi of Multan also joined the Shaikh in extending such an invitation to the Sultan. Both letters fell into the hands of Qubacha. He immediately had the Qazi executed and summoned the Shaikh to his palace. The Shaikh went fearlessly and, as usual, sat at Qubacha's right. Qubacha gave the letter to the Shaikh who, after reading it, affirmed it had been

[1] *AA*, p. 27.
[2] *FF*, p. 248.
[3] *FF*, pp. 247-48.
[4] *FF*, p. 151.

written by him. Qubacha asked for an explanation. The Shaikh replied that everything he had written was true and had been divinely prompted. He added that Qubacha could take any action in his power, but in reality, of course, he had no real independent power. Feeling trapped, Qubacha ordered the food to be brought. It was the Shaikh's custom to refrain from taking nourishment except in his *khānqah*, and Qubacha undoubtedly planned a retaliation if the Shaikh refused to eat at court. When the Shaikh had eaten, Qubacha's anger subsided.[1]

After the annexation of Multan and Sind by Iltutmish in 1228, relations between the Sultan of Delhi and the Shaikh became more intimate. Iltutmish invited him to preside over the *mahzar* organized to judge the allegations against Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din Tabrizi by the Shaikhu'l-Islam, Najmu'd-Din Sughra. After the latter's dismissal, the Sultan made Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya, Shaikhu'l-Islam.

Shaikhu'l-Islam was not a permanent position like Sadru's Sudur (chief controller of religious affairs, particularly charities) or Qazi ul-Quzat. The Sultans of Delhi conferred the title on religious dignitaries as an honour and recipients obtained both stipends and land. Incumbents were not obliged to be in constant attendance at court and offered only occasional advice to their rulers. Some Shaikhu'l-Islams, like Najmu'd-Din Sughra, however, took a very active part in politics and the administration. Some sufi authorities themselves gave the title to outstanding sufis, thus indicating their supreme spiritual status. To Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din, it meant additional finance to his *khanqah*. However, he is not known to have been closely involved in political matters beyond recommending his favourites to the Sultan. The repeated Mongol invasions of Multan made the life of townfolk miserable, but the presence of Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya was to them a great blessing. In Zu'l-hijja 644/April-May 1247, the Mongol, Suli Nuyin, besieged the Multan fort, but the Shaikh succeeded in negotiating peace through Malik Shamsu'd-Din, a Muslim dignitary in the Mongol army.[2]

With the Suhrawardi order there are few stories revealing that its members lived in extreme poverty, unlike members of the Chishti *silsila*. It would appear that Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya, even before he was appointed Shaikhu'l-Islam, was very rich. Large sums of money were paid to his children's teachers. On one occasion, the Governor of Multan needed grain and was given a store-house full of grain by the Shaikh. A pot of silver coins, which had been found amongst it, was returned to the Shaikh by the Governor, who said he had asked for grain, not money. The Shaikh replied he had merely wished to give the governor money as well.[3]

[1] *FF*, p. 134.

[2] Saif bin Muhammad bin Ya'qub Harawi, *Tarikh Nama-i-Hirat*, Calcutta, 1944, pp. 157-58.

[3] *FF*, pp. 236-37.

Jwalqis and qalandars from Khurasan and Central Asia would first visit Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din's *khanqah* at Multan *en route* to Delhi. In keeping with the Shaikh's custom, they were not welcomed. Once a group of *jwalqis* called on the Shaikh and were not given gifts. Emerging from the *khanqah* they became very noisy and started throwing bricks at the building. The Shaikh appeared and argued with them, saying he had not personally chosen to make Multan the Suhrawardi centre, but had been sent there by Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din. The *Jwalqis* were speechless and departed peacefully.[1]

Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din's relations with the Chishtis, Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki and Baba Farid, were most amicable. Amongst themselves they had divided areas of respective spiritual influence and this helped to counter any misunderstandings. Once a musician called 'Abdu'llah was intending to go to Multan from Ajodhan. He asked Baba Farid to pray for his safe journey. The Baba, however, replied that the limit of his spiritual influence was at a certain water tank and that beyond it began the area of Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din whose prayers he should attain. The musician acted on the Baba's advice and safely completed his journey.[2]

Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din strongly discouraged sufis from seeking guidance from a number of different *pirs*, urging them to lay their heads on one rather than a number of thresholds.[3] He laid great stress on performing *namaz* and admitted that all his achievements were the result of it.[4] According to him, omission of *namaz* amounted to death.[5] He assigned a secondary place to supererogatory prayers and *zikr* and sufi discipline. Once when some of his disciples were performing ablutions at a particular tank the Shaikh arrived. With the exception of one disciple, who continued washing, they all rushed to their *pir* to pay their respects. However, it was the lone disciple who was praised by Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din as the most outstanding present, for he had chosen to complete his ablutions first and had therefore shown a greater respect for religious duties.[6]

Unlike the Chishtis, Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din did not observe incessant fasting and ate normally. Occasionally he indulged in *sama'*.[7]

Like all eminent sufis, Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din emphasized that the *sine qua non* of meditation and contemplation was the expulsion of everything from the heart except that connected with God. The company of people should be replaced by a constant recitation of *zikr*. A sufi should seriously control his lower-self in all conversations and actions. He should not talk or do anything unless it was necessary.

[1] *FF*, p. 56.
[2] *FF*, pp. 152-53.
[3] *FF*, pp. 32-3.
[4] *FF*, p. 8.
[5] *FF*, p. 237.
[6] Jamali, pp. 123-24.
[7] *FF*, pp. 39, 152.

Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din died on 7 Safar, 661/21 December, 1262.[1] For about half a century after settling in Multan he had been the most celebrated sufi in that region. His significance increased due to Mongol raids in the area which prompted local governors and officials to continually seek his blessings and prayers. The fame of his piety in Khurasan and Transoxiana facilitated successful negotiations with the Mongol invaders.

Another important *khalifa* of Shaikh Sihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi was Saiyid Nuru'd-Din Mubarak Ghaznawi. After his birth, his father took him to an eminent saint, Khwaja Muhammad Ajal Shirazi, to be blessed; according to tradition it was to that visit that Nuru'd-Din owed his later prominence as a sufi.[2] No other details are known of his earlier life, but by the time he reached Delhi he was at the height of his fame. Iltutmish appointed Shaikh Nuru'd-Din Mubarak, Shaikhu'l-Islam, and he was called by the people of the city, Mir-i Dihli (Lord of Delhi).[3] According to Ziya'u'd-Din Barani, he frequently visited the Sultan and in his sermons emphasized that all court customs were illegal and blasphemous and were founded on the traditions of the Sasanian rulers of Iran. Protection of the religion of Islam (*din-panahi*) by rulers was only possible by following four principles. Those who abided by them would be rewarded however sinful a life they had led, by being counted, on Judgement Day, among the prophets and saints. Saiyid Nuru'd-Din Mubarak's definition of Muslims excluded non-Sunnis. His four principles for the protection of Islam were as follows:

1. They (rulers) should promote Islamic customs, promulgate the commands of the *Shari'a*, enforcing what is ordained and prohibiting what is forbidden by it, and uproot *kufr* (infidelity), *shirk* (polytheism) and idolatry. If they cannot fully uproot *kufr* and *shirk* they should make every effort to disgrace and humiliate Hindus, *mushriks* (polytheists) and idolaters, for they are inveterate enemies of God and the Prophet Muhammad. They should not tolerate the sight of Hindus, and in particular they should exterminate the Brahmans, who are the leaders of heretics and disseminators of heresy. They should not allow *kafirs* (infidels) and *mushriks* to lead an honourable life or assign to them high office.
2. Sins, debauchery and adultery should not be openly committed in Islamic towns, and offenders should be ruthlessly punished. If prostitutes do not relinquish their sinful profession, they should be compelled to practise their trade secretly. This should not be totally prohibited for if there are no prostitutes, rogues might be forced to rape Muslim women in harems.

[1] *AA*, p. 28.
[2] *KM*, pp. 225-26.
[3] *AA*, p. 29.

3. The duty of the enforcement of *Shari'a* should be entrusted to the pious, and God-fearing officers who have expert knowledge of *Shari'a* and *Tariqa*, and should not be given to the untrustworthy or self-seeker. Philosophers should be banished and the teaching of philosophy prohibited in Islamic territories. The irreligious and the enemies of Sunni beliefs that is, Shi'is, should be mercilessly disgraced and should not receive government posts.
4. Justice should be strictly dispensed, but it is only possible if the dread and fear of the king uproots tyranny and tyrants.[1]

Saiyid Nuru'd-Din added that only compliance with the above principles guaranteed the salvation of rulers and mere prayers, fastings and great acts of charity would not assist them.

Barani quotes Balban as an authority on Shaikh Nuru'd-Din's sermons. This may be Barani's own view. Nevertheless, the sermons were an abridged version devised by Ghazali and Nizamu'l-Mulk of the Perso-Islamic system of polity, which had been evolved at the Saljuqid court. A modern scholar's view that philosophy was a problem which had been highlighted during the Tughluq period[2] is historically inaccurate, as the study had concerned both theologians and sufis from the end of the tenth century onwards. Concern by the orthodox and sufis at the popularity of philosophy is reflected even in the *Fawa'idu'l-Fu'ad*. The information available is, however, insufficient to ascribe, with much certainty, the above theories to Saiyid Nuru'd-Din. However, he may also have forwarded identical, or similar, theories currently accepted in that period, which had been devised earlier.

Saiyid Nuru'd-Din died in 632/1234–35 and was buried near Shamsi Hauz.[3]

A disciple of Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi who did not achieve a great deal of fame was Maulana Majdu'd-Din Hajji. He is said to have performed the *hajj* twelve times, although, of course, numbers used in mystic literature are not necessarily accurate. In the reign of Sultan Shamsu'd-Din, Maulana Majdu'd-Din reached Delhi and at the former's insistence, accepted the position of *sadr* which he performed efficiently. After two years, however, he resigned, devoting the rest of his life to spiritual exercises.[4]

Another little known *khalifa* of Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi was Shaikh Ziya'u'd-Din Rumi. He seems to have lived to an old age as he had initiated Sultan Qutbu'd-Din Mubarak Shah Khalji as both disciple and *khalifa*. The Sultan's aim to make Ziya'u'd-Din a rival of

[1] *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, pp. 41-44. The above is only a summary; *see* the detailed Hindi translation in S.A.A. Rizvi, *Adi Turk kalin Bharat*, Aligarh, 1956, pp. 152-55.

[2] *Some aspects of religion and politics*, p. 161.

[3] *AA*, p. 29; *Kalimat*, pp. 22-23.

[4] *AA*, p. 50.

Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' was unsuccessful, due to the former's increased senility. Ziya'u'd-Din died soon afterwards and was buried on the road to the tomb of Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki in Delhi.[1]

Shah Turkman Sahib was another of Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi's disciples and like others before him, had migrated to India from Khurasan. No authentic account, however, of Shah Turkman was available to Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq, who mentions only his name and that his tomb was located on the road to Firuzabad.[2]

Probably the most learned *khalifa* of Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi was Qazi Hamidu'd-Din Nagauri. He is not to be confused, however, with the Chishti Hamidu'd-Din Suwali, to whom we have previously referred. Hamidu'd-Din Nagauri's first name was Muhammad, his father was 'Ata'u'llah Mahmud. The family migrated from Bukhara to Delhi sometime before 1200, where 'Ata'u'llah died. Shaikh Hamid was appointed the Qazi of Nagaur and served in that position for three years. About this period the Bada'un-born *Hadis* scholar, Maulana Raziu'd-Din Hasan Saghani, who compiled the *Mashariqu'l-Anwar*, reached Nagaur, where Qazi Hamidu'd-Din attended the Maulana's lecture on a book of *Hadis*, entitled *Misbah-al Duja*.[3]

A qazi's life did not appeal to Hamidu'd-Din and he left for Baghdad where he became Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi's disciple. There he met Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki. From Baghdad, Qazi Hamidu'd-Din left for Medina where he remained for just over a year. His next visit was to Mecca, where he stayed for three years. Leaving Mecca he visited a large number of towns, reaching Delhi after Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar had settled there. They became close friends.

Although a Suhrawardi, Shaikh Hamidu'd-Din's friendship with Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din aroused in him a great interest in *sama'*. He made vigorous efforts to popularize the practice and the 'ulama' were powerless to suppress it. Qazi Sa'd and Qazi 'Imad urged Iltutmish to legislate against the practice and the Sultan arranged a *mahzar* to discuss the question. However, Shaikh Hamidu'd-Din silenced the Sultan by reminding him that he himself had succeeded to Delhi's throne because of the prayers of the Baghdad sufis, for whom he had waited an entire night while they indulged in *sama'*. Sa'd and 'Imad pressed the Qazi to prove his case logically, but the Shaikh ordered his servants to start playing music. This is reported as having moved everyone at the *mahzar* to ecstasy.[4] Such a story, however, is anachronistic for it was not possible for both the Qazi and the Sultan to have been together in Baghdad.[5]

However, the struggle between Qazi Hamidu'd-Din and the 'ulama'

[1]Jamali, p. 76; *AA*, p. 73.
[2]*AA*, pp. 48-9.
[3]*Sururu's-Sudur*, pp. 61, 273.
[4]*Futuhu's-Salatin*, pp. 117-20; *Kalimat*, pp. 33-34.
[5]See Minhaj Siraj, *Tabaqat-i Nasiri*, Calcutta, 1873-81, pp. 165-70.

was a protracted one. Among the former's non-sufi supporters was Qazi Minhaj Siraj, the author of the *Tabaqat-i Nasiri*.[1] Despite his official position as a Qazi, Minhaj Siraj was a great supporter of *sama'*. Qazi Hamidu'd-Din's wit and knowledge of Islamic law generally frustrated the 'ulama's efforts to defeat him on legal issues. Once he arranged a *sama'* gathering, Shaikh Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar and other distinguished sufis were present. Maulana Ruknu'd-Din Samarqandi, an inveterate opponent of *sama'*, accompanied by a group of followers, rushed to the house where it was being held. At Qazi Hamidu'd-Din's request the owner of the house left the place. The Maulana and his party were then faced with the dilemma of whether or not to enter the house without the owner being present. However, they decided to withdraw, after which *sama'* was continued.[2]

The Qazi's works were studied enthusiastically by both Chishtiyya and Suhrawardiyya sufis. One of these, *Lawa'ih* (Flashes of Light), no longer exists but was a most important and advanced sufi text book at that time. Baba Farid lectured on the work to his chief disciples. The manuscripts of three other works, called the *'Ishqiyya*,[3] the *Tawali' al-Shumus*,[4] and the *Risala Min Kalam*, have survived. In his *'Ishqiyya*, Qazi Hamidu'd-Din Nagauri says that although Lover and Beloved appear as two separate identities, they are in fact identical. Whoever sees them as two is absurd and whoever does not see them at all is insane. One who is lost in Being is a part of God's Attributes. This state makes sufis present everywhere.[5] The extinction of 'I' leads to the predominence of 'He'. Both Lover and Beloved mirror each other. Love is the source of everything that exists. Fire is the burning quality of love, air is the aspect of restlessness in love; water is the movement of love and earth is its immutable aspect. The essence of all existent beings is Allah, everything else are His branches, which are dependent on the main trunk.[6]

The *Tawali' al-Shumus*, also written by Qazi Hamidu'd-Din, is a detailed exposition of the names of Allah. The greatest name of God is *Huwa* (He) and it indicates His eternal nature, holy and free from decline and fall. The following chapter on the Unity of Being is characterized by the subtle explanation of *Huwa*:

> 'Say: He is Allah, the One!
> Allah, the eternally Besought of all!
> He begetteth not nor was begotten.
> And there is none comparable unto Him.'[7]

[1] *AA*, p. 80.
[2] *FF*, p. 252.
[3] Delhi Persian collections, India office, London.
[4] The *Risala* and the *Tawali'* are in the Habibganj collections, Aligarh Muslim University.
[5] *'Ishqiyya* ff. 2b-5b, 31a-37b, See *Dabistan-i Mazahib*, Lucknow, 1904, p. 374.
[6] *Tawali' al-Shumus*, ff. 3b-9b.
[7] Qur'an, CXII, the chapter entitled the Unity.

The Qazi's letters were not compiled in book form but those written to Baba Farid were preserved by him. Once the Baba wished to partake of *sama'* although no musician was present. Asking Maulana Badru'd-Din to bring him the Qazi's letters, he began to read them and instantly fell into an ecstatic swoon. The following verse in the letter was significant:

> 'How can I gain that intellect which can perceive Thy perfection?
> How can I get that spirit which can comprehend Thy Majesty?
> I know that Thou removeth the veil from Thy beauty
> Where can I get that eye which can perceive it?'[1]

A distinguished scholar named Qutbu'd-Din Kashani believed that everything he and other students had read, as well as what they had not read, were to be found in the treatises of Qazi Hamidu'd-Din.[2]

The Qazi's witty sayings were long remembered by sufis. He refused to give payments to visiting dervishes, saying that, he too, was running a spiritual shop, and it was therefore most improper of them to ask for anything.[3]

According to Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din, at one time there was a long drought. The Sultan, whose name he fails to mention, sent a message to the dervishes that his business was war and theirs was to pray for the welfare of the people, therefore they should pray for rain. Qazi Hamidu'd-Din advised the Sultan to arrange an entertainment for the dervishes in order that they might perform *sama'*. The Sultan was pleased, and after the *sama'* rain fell heavily.[4]

Despite his eminence as a scholar and in the sufi movement, Qazi Hamidu'd-Din Nagauri did not generally enrol disciples, and only four were named. One was a weaver, Shaikh Ahmad Naharwani, and there is a story that when a thief entered the Shaikh's house he found nothing, and disappointed, was about to leave. The Shaikh, however, gave him about twelve yards of cloth he had woven himself. The following day the latter returned with his family to the Shaikh's house and repented of his sins. Later he became an eminent sufi with a large number of followers. When Shaikh Ahmad walked from his house his disciples would accompany him. Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya, not well-known for his praise of other sufis, was a great admirer of Shaikh Ahmad.[5]

The Qazi's second disciple, Shaikh 'Ainu'd-Din, was a butcher. The third, Shaikh Shahi Muy-tab (Hair-Rope Maker) lived in Bada'un. One day he and his disciples went out and cooked a milk pudding. When the food was laid out, Shahi remarked that some perfidy had taken place in

[1] *FF*, pp. 164-65.
[2] Jamali, p. 150; For biographical notes see *Kalimat*, pp. 24-33.
[3] *Sururu's Sudur*. pp. 255-56; For other witty remarks *see FF*, p. 253.
[4] *KM*. p. 45. Sultan Shamsu'd-Din Iltutmish is meant here.
[5] *AA* p. 47; Jamali, pp. 154-55; *KM*, p. 276.

the cooking of the pudding. Two sufis who had cooked it said that when the milk began to boil, there was no pot readily available to put it in, so they drank it rather than have it wasted. The Shaikh replied that it was better to waste the milk than not to have distributed it equally. He refused to accept their apologies. It was a very hot day, and as expiation for their sin, Shahi asked them to stand in the sun. After some time they began to perspire profusely. Taking pity on them the Shaikh ordered them into the shade. Then, summoning a barber, he asked him to take from his body blood equivalent to the quantity of perspiration lost by his disciples, in order that he too might share their suffering.[1]

Once Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' fell ill and requested Shaikh Shahi to pray for him. Shahi refused to pray for such an eminent personality, considering it an impertinence. He excused himself by saying he was merely an artisan, but Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din insisted. Shahi summoned two disciples and said he would pray for Nizamu'd-Din's body from the head to the navel, and the others should pray for the recovery of each side of the Shaikh's lower parts.[2]

The *Akhbaru'l-Akhyar* mentions a fourth disciple of Qazi Hamidu'd-Din, called Khwaja Mahmud Muyina-Duz (Tailor of Fur). Like his *pir* he was a close companion of Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din and was buried near the Khwaja's tomb.[3] Qazi Hamidu'd-Din's son Maulana Nasihu'd-Din, lived in Delhi and also enrolled disciples.[4]

The second most outstanding disciple of Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi, who became famous in Bengal, was Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din Tabrizi. He studied at several places, including Bukhara. Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din and his father were disciples of Shaikh Abu Sa'id Tabrizi, but after the latter's death Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din went to Baghdad and became the disciple of Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din. He excelled over all the Shaikh's disciples in serving his *pir*. Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din was, at that time, quite elderly but continued to perform his yearly *hajj*. Because of his age, cold food was harmful to him. Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din devised and had made a special type of stove on which pots of hot food could be kept warm. He carried it on his head, dispensing food to the Shaikh whenever it was needed. He continued to serve his *pir* with great devotion for seven years.

Both Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din and Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya travelled together from Baghdad to Nishapur. Their habits, however, were quite different. *En route*, Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din would constantly pray and meditate, while Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din would visit local dervishes and spend time sightseeing. At Nishapur they parted company. The tradition is that Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din visited the great poet and mystic, Shaikh

[1]*KM*, pp. 210-11; Jamali, pp. 151-52.
[2]Jamali, pp. 153; *AA*, p. 49; The division is influenced by the Hath-Yogic ideas.
[3]*AA*, p. 50; *Kalimat*, pp. 42-3.
[4]*AA*, p. 51.

Faridu'd-Din 'Attar. When he returned to where he and Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din were lodging, the former gave an account of his visit to 'Attar. He related that he had been so overwhelmed by 'Attar's personality that he had been unable to recall the mental image of Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din. This so annoyed Baha'u'd-Din that they decided to travel alone.

Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din Tabrizi did not remain long in Multan and travelled to Delhi, via Ajodhan. Sultan Shamsu'd-Din gave him a warm welcome but Najmu'd-Din Sughra, the Shaikhu'l-Islam, resented his presence. The Sultan ordered the Shaikhu'l-Islam to assign the Shaikh a suitable residence, close to the palace. Najmu'd-Din gave him a house named *Baitu'l-Jinn* believed to be haunted by evil spirits. He argued that if the Shaikh was spiritually perfect, the evil spirits would fail to harm him, if he was not, he would be punished for his false claims. Before Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din entered the house, to the bewilderment of Najmu'd-Din, the evil spirits had departed. Nevertheless the latter continued to try to influence the Sultan against the Shaikh.

Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din had bought a handsome Turkic slave boy for 1,500 *dinars*. One day Shaikh Najmu'd-Din and the Sultan performed their morning prayers on the palace roof from where they could see into Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din's house. After finishing his prayers, the latter lay on his cot and drew the quilt over him, while his slave massaged his feet. Najmu'd-Din took the Sultan near the edge of the roof to show him the scene. Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din is recorded as knowing that this was happening through his own spiritual powers, although it is possible the slave may have informed him. Throwing back the quilt he shouted to Najmu'd-Din that if he had looked closer he might have seen him embracing the boy. The Sultan attempted to prevent Shaikh Najmu'd-Din from further interfering in the affairs of Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din; however, another plot was hatched to discredit him.

A dancing girl, called Gawhar, was employed for a sum of 500 *dinars*, by Najmu'd-Din to accuse Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din of having committed adultery with her. He paid 250 *dinars* in cash and deposited the rest with a Muslim *baqqal* (grain merchant). As rehearsed, Gawhar made a statement to the Sultan, who consequently organized a *mahzar* to investigate the allegation. About two hundred eminent sufis and 'ulama' were invited. Najmu'd-Din, knowing of the rivalry between Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din and Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya, suggested that the latter act as chairman. This recommendation was accepted by the Sultan. As soon as Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din arrived, however, Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya ran to receive him and carry his shoes. The Sultan said that such respect by a chairman for the accused had made the *mahzar* useless. Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din replied that Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din had served his *pir* for seven years and therefore it was fitting for him to use the dust from Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din's feet as an eye-wash. Nevertheless, the allegation had been made and Gawhar had to be summoned. When she arrived,

the galaxy of 'ulama' and sufis so overwhelmed her that she admitted the charge was false and this was corroborated by the grain merchant.

Shaikh Najmu'd-Din was dismissed by the Sultan,[1] but Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din left Delhi for Bada'un soon afterwards as he was unhappy living there. In Bada'un he became friendly with Qazi Kamalu'd-Din, the local administrator. One day he visited the Qazi and was told by his servants that their master was performing prayers. The Shaikh smiled and asked whether the Qazi knew how to say his prayers. Next day the Qazi visited the Shaikh and said he had written a number of treatises on the ways to perform prayers and therefore it was impossible to question his ability in this regard. The Shaikh replied that the prayers of the 'ulama' were different to those of sufis. The Qazi asked whether they performed prostrations in a different way or recited from a different Qur'an. The 'ulama' said prayers facing the Ka'ba, replied Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din, but sufis did not pray unless they saw God's throne. That night the Qazi saw God's throne in a dream with Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din praying before it. Next day, he revisited the Shaikh, apologized and enrolled his son as his disciple.[2]

The manner in which Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din converted a Hindu in Bada'un is interesting. One day he was sitting outside his house when a curd seller from Katihar, a place which abounded with robbers, happened to pass the house. He was a robber, but as soon as his eyes fell on the Shaikh, he was so impressed that he became a Muslim and was renamed 'Ali. He possessed one hundred thousand *jitals* and these he presented to the Shaikh. Jalalu'd-Din asked him to keep the money in trust and distribute it through him. When he left for Lakhnauti, 'Ali Maula pursued him, but was ordered back to Bada'un by the Shaikh as the Muslims there had been left under his care. The Shaikh taught 'Ali only to perform prayers five times daily, but he became so renowned for his piety that many great sufis, the 'ulama' and others craved for his blessing.[3] He was present at the ceremony of the turban-tying of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya'.

Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din had many disciples in Bengal. He first lived at Lakhnauti, constructed a *khanqah* and attached a *langar* to it. He also bought some gardens and land to be attached to the monastery. He moved to Devatalla (Deva Mahal) near Pandua in northern Bengal. There a *kafir* (either a Hindu or a Buddhist) had erected a large temple and a well. The Shaikh demolished the temple and constructed a *takiya* (*khanqah*) and converted a large number of *kafirs*.[4] There is

[1]Jamali, pp. 168-69.

[2]*FF*, pp. 249-50; *KM*, pp. 211-12.

[3]*FF*, pp. 147-48; *KM*, pp. 191-92.

[4]Jamali, p. 171. An anecdote relating to Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din's stay in Deva Mahal reads like other stock-in-trade stories and fairytales. It was related by such an authority as Gisu Daraz. According to him Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din stayed at Pandua in the house of a flower

no evidence that they were 'down-trodden and persecuted Buddhists and Hindus,' as a modern scholar writes;[1] however, the Shaikh's memory was treasured by both Hindus and Muslims alike. Devatalla came to be known as Tabrizabad and attracted a large number of pilgrims.

In the *Rihla* of Ibn Battuta, Shah Jalal of Sylhet is confused with Shaikh Jalal al-Tabrizi whom he had visited. Halayodha Misra, the author of *Shek Subhodya*, also made the same mistake. The author is said to have been the court poet of Lakshmansena, the last Sena ruler of Bengal, but the work is of a later date. The date of Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din Tabrizi's death is unknown, and no reliable information of his Bengali *khalifas* is available.

The disciples of Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi, described above, were eminent in their own right, but the continuous history of the *silsila* can be traced only through the *khalifas* of Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya. He appointed his own son, Sadru'd-Din, known as 'Arif (Gnostic), his *khalifa.* Shaikh Sadru'd-Din had six brothers, but he alone inherited from his father property worth 700,000 *tankas.* According to Jamali, he immediately gave the entire amount to the poor, for like his father he believed he was unable to spend it judiciously.[2] The *Sururu's-Sudur*, however, gives a different story. It says that Shaikh Hamidu'd-Din Suwali, whom one of Shaikh Baha'u'-Din's sons had harassed for not going to congregational prayers, had cursed him. After the death of Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din the son undertook a journey. On the way, robbers abducted him and demanded as ransom his share of Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din's property. He paid the money but they also asked him to write to Shaikh Sadru'd-Din for his share as well. After receiving all the money, they released the Shaikh's son.[3] Regardless of which story is the correct one, it seems clear that wealth accumulated by Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din did not long remain with his sons.

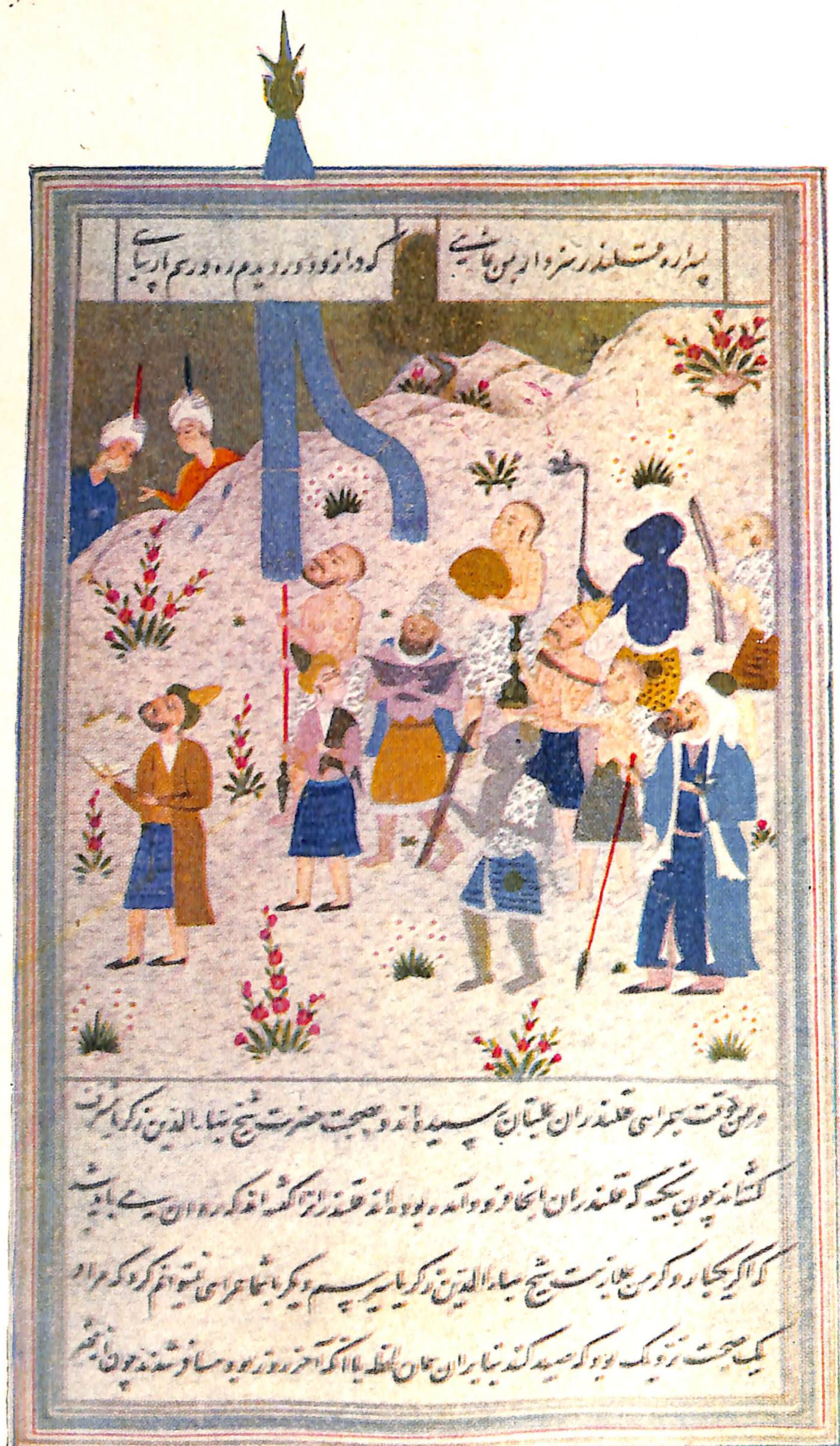
Sadru'd-Din's relations with Balban's son, Prince Muhammad, were cordial and the *khanqah* received from him many gifts. An anecdote given by Jamali, relating a conflict between Prince Muhammad and the Shaikh, is interesting. He says that the wife of the Prince was the daughter of

vendor. On the day of his arrival, he found each of the house members crying. On enquiry he was told there was a demon in the temple who daily ate a young man. It was the king's duty to provide the demon with his daily food. On that day it was the turn of the young son in the family. The Shaikh requested them to send him in place of their son but they refused to accept the offer for fear of the king. The Shaikh, then followed the young man to the temple and killed the demon with a single blow from his staff. When the king accompanied by his retinue reached the temple to worship the demon they were amazed to find the demon killed and an old man dressed in black with his head covered with a blanket. The Shaikh invited them to see the fate with their god. The sight of their vanquished idol prompted them to accept Islam. *Jawami'u'l-Kilam*, British Museum MS., Or. 252, ff. 126a-b.

[1]M.A. Rahman, *Social and cultural history of Bengal*, I, Karachi, 1963, p. 99.

[2]Jamali, pp. 128-29.

[3]*Sururu's-Sudur*, p. 124.



'Iraqi with the Qalandars from the *Majalisu'l-'Ushshaq*
Bodleian, dated 959/1552, Ms. Ouseley Add. 24, f. 79 R.

Ruknu'd-Din Ibrahim, a son of Iltutmish. She was very beautiful and the Prince dearly loved her. He was, however, a drunkard and had a temperamental personality. Once he became so angry with his wife that he divorced her, but his infatuation for her beauty persisted. He consulted the 'ulama' about remarrying her. They told him that the *Shari'a* did not permit remarriage unless she was married to someone else who spent a night with her and then divorced her. The Prince was upset by this plan and, taking the Qazi into his confidence, asked his advice. The Qazi suggested he marry his former wife to Shaikh Sadru'd-Din and then request him to divorce her. The marriage was performed. Next day, the Prince sent the Qazi to ask the Shaikh for a divorce. The girl's entreaties, however, to remain in the Shaikh's house prompted Shaikh Sadru'd-Din to refuse to comply with the Prince's request. Shocked, the Prince toyed with killing the Qazi, then the Shaikh; however, Multan was invaded by the Mongols and the Prince was killed, according to sufi tradition, due to a miracle of Shaikh Sadru'd-Din.[1] Whether the story is true or not, there remains little doubt that the Shaikh was a man of independent views.

According to Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq, a disciple of Shaikh Sadru'd-Din, named Khwaja Ziya'u'd-Din, compiled the *malfuzat* of his teacher and entitled it *Kunuzu'l-Fawa'id*. The work is no longer extant but extracts in the *Akhbaru'l-Akhyar* indicate that, like all sufis, the Shaikh discussed topics such as God, *zikr* and the transitory nature of the world. According to the Shaikh, sufis should not concentrate on anything except God and should not desire heaven or fear hell. No breath should be inhaled or exhaled without *zikr*, for perpetual *zikr* was a divine light which removed all darkness.[2] Shaikh Sadru'd-Din died on 23 Zu'lhijja 684/19 February 1286.

Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya had many famous disciples, one was Saiyid Jalalu'd-Din Bukhari, also called Jalal Surkh (Red). He first migrated from Bukhara to Bhakkar, however local jealousy forced him to migrate to Uch. He remained there until his death.[3]

One of Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din's disciples, Hasan Afghan, was illiterate. The Shaikh was proud of Hasan Afghan and used to say that if God asked him what he had brought from the world, he would present Hasan as a gift. According to Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya', on one occasion Hasan Afghan was wandering through the streets, and at prayer-time went to the nearest mosque and began to perform *namaz* behind the *Imam*. When it was finished and the congregation had dispersed, Hasan went up to the *Imam* and said to him: 'Khwaja! you commenced *namaz* and I followed you. In your thoughts you travelled from here to Delhi, did some shopping, and then went to Khurasan and Multan, then back to the Mosque.

[1]*Gulshan-i Ibrahimi*, pp. 410-11. According to Jamali the name of the Prince was Qadr Khan. Jamali, pp. 135-36.

[2]*AA*, pp. 61-63.

[3]*AA*, p. 61.

Unfortunately I had to wander with you. What sort of *namaz* is this?' Although illiterate, Hasan Afghan could recognize Qur'anic verses from some Persian and Arabic writings. He said that the divine light which he saw in these verses was not to be found elsewhere.[1]

The main reason for Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya's fame in the scholarly world, however, was due to the achievements of his disciple, Shaikh Fakhru'd-Din Ibrahim, popularly known as 'Iraqi, because this was his *takhallus* ('*nom de plume*'). He came from the neighbourhood of Hamadan, where he had memorized the Qur'an by heart and would recite it in his melodious voice. He built a beautiful *madrasa* in Hamadan where he lectured. Once a party of qalandars stayed there. Among them was a handsome boy who so infatuated 'Iraqi that he decided to give up his teaching profession. A few days later the party left for Khurasan, and the love-lorn 'Iraqi pursued them in the guise of a qalandar, with shaved beard and eyebrows. Travelling through Khurasan, they reached Multan where they stayed with Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din. When the qalandars set off from Multan, a storm dispersed the party and 'Iraqi returned to the Shaikh's *khanqah*. The force of the Shaikh's personality made 'Iraqi forget the young boy and he began living in a cell which the Shaikh had assigned him, as a spiritual retreat.

The Shaikh's training enabled 'Iraqi to exchange his earthly love for divine love but *zikr* and meditation was not his passion, and after a few days in the cell, he was filled with ecstasy and composed a *ghazal* (ode) which began:

> 'The wine wherewith the cup they first filled high,
> Was borrowed from the Saqi's[2] languorous eye.'

Baha'u'd-Din was opposed to poetry and music, but he tolerated its indulgence by Fakhru'd-Din Ibrahim. His other disciples were shocked to learn that this *ghazal* was being sung in local taverns to the accompaniment of the harp and zither. They complained to the Shaikh, who asked 'Iraqi to recite the complete *ghàzal*. It ended with the lines:

> 'Why should they seek to hurt 'Iraqi's fame,
> Since they themselves their secrets thus proclaim?[3]

The motif of the identification of self with the Object of Love in 'Iraqi's verse so deeply moved Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya that he declared 'Iraqi's training to be complete. He ordered him to give up retirement and meditation, presented him with his own *khirqa* to wear and later gave him his daughter in marriage. Before he died, Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din

[1] *FF*, p. 12.
[2] *Saqi* means a cup bearer but here God is meant.
[3] For the translation of the *Ghazal* see *Literary history of Persia*, III, pp. 126-27.

appointed him his *khalifa*, but after his death, the jealousy of other disciples forced 'Iraqi to leave Multan about 1263. It would appear he had been there since about 1239.

'Iraqi first went on a pilgrimage and from Mecca went to Asia Minor. At Quniya (Iconium) he attended lectures given by Shaikh Sadru'd-Din on the *Fusus al-Hikam* by Shaikh Muhi'u'd-Din Ibn al-'Arabi. He also composed his famous treatise, the *Lama'at* (Flashes or Effulgences) which explained Ibn al-'Arabi's subtle mystic philosophy in a very impressive Persian prose interspersed with poetry.

An important dignitary of Asia Minor, named Mu'inu'd-Din Parwana, built 'Iraqi a khanqah at Tuqat which became an important centre for sufi musical gatherings. After Parwana's death, the Shaikh migrated to Egypt where the Sultan became Iraqi's disciple. 'Iraqi continued his habit of roaming the streets and passionately admiring beauty wherever he saw it. From Egypt, 'Iraqi migrated to Syria. The 'ulama,' sufis and various dignitaries of Damascus gave him a warm welcome. 'Iraqi's son, Kabiru'd-Din, who had come from Multan, joined his father. 'Iraqi died on 8 Zu'lqa'da 688/23 November 1289 and was buried near the tomb of Ibn al-'Arabi.[1]

Iraqi's devotion to Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya was profound; in a verse he wrote:

> 'If thou shouldst ask of the world 'Who is the guide of men?'
> Thou wilt hear from heaven no other answer than 'Zakariyya'.'

'Iraqi's *Diwan*, a *masnawi* entitled *'Ushshaq-Nama* (Book of Lovers) expresses the epitome of mystical ecstasy, but his *Lama'at* surpasses it. Jami wrote a commentary on the *Lama'at*, entitled the *Ashi'atu'l-Lama'at* (Rays of Flashes). According to him work would awaken the sleeper, cause him who was awakened to apprehend secret mysteries, kindle the fire of Love, and 'put in motion the chain of longing.' Its foreword is as follows:

> 'The derivation of both Lover and Beloved is from Love, which, in its Abode of Glory, is exempt from differentiation, and, in the Sanctuary of its own Identity, is sanctified from inwardness and outwardness. Yea, in order to display its perfection, in such a way as is identical with its Essence and (equally) identical with its Attributes, it shows itself to itself in the Mirror of Loverhood and Belovedness, and reveals its Beauty to its own Contemplation by means of Seer and the Vision. Thus the names of Loverhood and the Belovedness appeared, and the description of the Seeker and the Quest became manifest. It showed the Outward to the Inmost, and the

[1] *NU*, pp. 601-05; Jamali, pp. 107-09.

Voice of Loverhood arose: it showed the Inmost to the Outward, and the name of Belovedness was made plain.'[1]

Before his death 'Iraqi sent a copy of the *Lama'at* to Shaikh Sadru'd-Din 'Arif, obviously in an attempt to popularize Ibn al-'Arabi in India.

Like Shaikh Baha'ud-Din Zakariyya, his son, Shaikh Sadru'd-Din 'Arif, was also fortunate in having a disciple who was also a gifted scholar. This was Amir Husain, the son of 'Alim bin Abi'l-Hasan al-Husaini. Jamali describes him in connection with the disciples of Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya, adding that in the reign of Iltutmish he visited Delhi with his spiritual director for the *mahzar* which had been organized to investigate the allegations against Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din Tabrizi.[2] Modern scholars also describe him as Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din's disciple.[3] One of Amir Husain's works entitled the *Nuzhatu'l-Arwah* (Delight of Souls) assists in the fixing of his dates, dispelling much of the uncertainty surrounding his life. In the last chapter, the author says he was then forty and that he had written the work in 711/1311–12.[4] Accordingly, he must have been born about 671/1272–73, while Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya died in December 1262, ten years earlier. Similarly, the date of his death, 16 Shawwal 718/11 December 1318, given by Jami is incorrect,[5] for another of his works, entitled the *Zadu'l-Musafirin* (Supplies for Travellers on the Mystic Road) was composed in 720/1320.[6]

Amir Husain's birth place was at Ghizv, a village in Ghur, where he obtained a very good education. From there, he went to Multan and became a disciple of Shaikh Sadru'd-Din. In a *masnawi*, entitled *Kanzu'r-Rumuz* (The Treasure of Mysteries), Husaini praised the Shaikhs, Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi, Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya and Sadru'd-Din.[7] As he was about fourteen years old when Shaikh Sadru'd-Din died, many biographers believe he was in fact the disciple of Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din, the son of Shaikh Sadru'd-Din.[8]

The stories of Amir Husain's conversion to sufism are obviously mythical. For a long time he stayed in Multan and wrote verses in praise of Sultan Jalalu'd-Din Firuz Khalji (1290–96). He then migrated to Herat where he became very famous. Early in 1311 he wrote a letter to the celebrated mystic of Tabriz, Sa'du'd-Din Mahmud Shabistari, (d. 720/1320), listing the following fifteen questions on sufism. The answers are also outlined below:

[1] *Literary history of Persia*, III, pp. 137-38.
[2] Jamali, p. 110.
[3] K.A. Nizami in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new, III, p. 635.
[4] *Nuzhatu'l-Arwah*, India Office, Ethé, 1821, London, ff. 56a-b.
[5] *NU*, p. 606.
[6] *Zadu'l-Musafirin*, Ethé, 1832, f. 251a.
[7] *Kanzu'r-Rumuz*, Ethé, 1830, f. 5a.
[8] *NU*, p. 605.

1. Q. What is the exact nature of thought (*tafakkur*) relating to the sole existence of Real Being?
   A. Thought is of two kinds: one logical reasoning, the other spiritual illumination. The first method is inapplicable, because sense and reason cannot transcend phenomena. They are powerless to shake off the illusion of the apparent reality of the sensible world. Whatever philosophers and theologians may say of God merely serves to prove their own incapacity to understand Him.
2. Q. What sort of thought conditions the mystic path?
   A. Reason is blinded by excessive light, as a bat is by the sun. In the phenomenal world are reflected, as in a mirror, various attributes of being.
   'Natural realism' should be abandoned and then 'The Truth,' from which all else emanates, can be seen. Although man, who is the 'microcosm' in macrocosm, may see in himself reflections of all the divine attributes, there is a side to his nature which is both evil and non-existent. This deters him from a union in which thought is no longer possible.
3. Q. What is 'I' and the meaning of 'travel into yourself?'
   A. The journey entails travelling from the phenomenal, non-existent self to the real self, which is one with 'The Truth.' When a man's phenomenal self is effaced, only the real Self remains, the control of law over him is rendered ineffective.
4. Q. Who is the traveller and who is the Perfect Man?
   A. The traveller is one who journeys to God. But the Perfect Man is one who does not rest at this ecstatic union with 'The Truth.' He journeys back down to the phenomenal world where he confirms to outward laws and by so doing brings forth the fruit of good works. Perfection in the saintly state would be seen in the Mahdi, 'the seal of the Saints' who would have attained the 'Truth' in a perfect way.
5. Q. Who learns the secret of unity?
   A. One who knows that all things are One dies to his own self and lives, with his regenerate soul, in God. This is achieved by sweeping away everything that separates God and the soul, for true mystical union cannot be achieved when duality and self remain.
6. Q. If the Knower and the Known are one, how does the Knower feel drawn towards the Known?
   A. The fact that man in his phenomenal state does not exist without God makes him aspire to a union and he is drawn magnetically towards him.
7. Q. Why is a person who says, 'I am the Truth', a vain babbler?

A. Someone like Mansur al-Hallaj, who has discarded his phenomenal self can say 'I am the Truth.' However, God can withdraw what belongs to Him and all things can fall away into their original nothingness contained in the phenomenal self.

8. Q. How one can become 'united'?
   A. Union means annihilation of the phenomenal element in man, however this cannot be achieved on his own. It is a continuous process in which phenomena are constantly annihilated. Annihilation is union.

9. Q. What is the union between contingency and necessity?
   A. The illusion of free-will is Magianism involving the belief that initially there is an evil cause which can be routed by a good one. This, however, is an illusion because the only free agent is 'The Truth.' Man is a passive instrument in God's hands, his only glory lying in abandoning his own will to that of God's.

10. Q. What is the relationship between the holy law and sainthood?
    A. The law can be compared to a shell and the state of sainthood to the pearl within it. The sufi must extract the pearl, without breaking it until it is fully formed. So without the law a mystic cannot develop towards the higher state to which he aspires, but it is the disposition of saintliness which sanctifies the efforts of devotees.

11. Q. What part is greater than the whole and how can it be found?
    A. Absolute Being is the all-embracing Being. However, in one sense phenomenal being is wider because it is a combination of the two and is renewed at every moment. In a perfect union there remains no duality, so faith, reason, devotion, paradise and so on become meaningless. Union in the world is followed by separation.

12. Q. Are the eternal and temporal separate. Is one the world and the other God?
    A. No, all is One and the eternal and temporal are not two distinct entities. The temporal is a subjective illusion, just like a circle of fire which can be seen when a single spark is whirled around quickly.

13–15. Q. How can the use of various sufi symbols in poetry, such as the eye, lip, cheek, curl, and mole, be explained? How can one also explain that sufis haunt taverns and may even believe that idol worship, ideas from Christianity, and so on, can be useful in the mystic path?
   A. Sufis express their conception of God and the universe and of their own ecstatic experiences in language which may appear unseemly to others, but it is not so to them. They are

> also ready to appreciate the positive and true aspects contained in other religions such as Christianity, Magianism and even in idolatry.

Husaini himself wrote a number of important sufic works. The *Nuzhatu'l-Arwah*, which describes the spiritual path of holy pilgrims, was written in mixed prose and verse and became a popular sufi text. Two commentaries on the work are known. *Kanzu'r-Rumuz* in the form of *masnawi* deals, with the obligatory duties of Islam from the sufi point of view. It also gives an account of knowledge, truth, *ma'rifa*, the heart, sufism in general, and the stages of a sufi journey. The *Tarabu'l-Majalis* (Emotion of Mystic Assemblies) is a prose work of considerable ethical and mystical significance. Amir Husain's *Zadu'l-Musafirin* (Provisions for Travellers on the Sufi Path) imitates both Sana'i's *Hadiqatu'l-Haqiqa* and the *Gulistan* of Sa'di[1] of Shiraz (b. between 610–5/1213–19, d. 691/1292). His *Diwan* and other works such as *Sirat al-Mustaqim*, *Ruh al-Arwah* and *Sirr-Nama* are quoted in various texts but have not yet been discovered. A poetical collection of Amir Husain, entitled *Haft Ganj* (Seven Treasuries) has recently been brought to light.

The ethical works of Husaini lack a mystical sensitivity and a passion in the expression of divine love and could even be described as pedagogical. In *Kanzu'r-Rumuz* Husaini reminds his readers who speak of Islam to do unto others as they do to themselves.[2] He also believes that love is known only to true lovers and not to the sensuous, love being only to differentiate between the *kufr* and faith. The principal condition of asceticism to Husaini is the complete obliteration of all thoughts relating to both the material and non-material worlds.[3]

A love of poetry inculcated in Amir Husaini an interest in *sama'* which he considered to be the exclusive practice of holy men.[4] Sufis, he believed were a divine army with *Shari'a* the hair and *Tariqa* the head. Worldly lust amongst mystics was a source of impiety and heresy. Charlatans considered that indulgence in lust was *Tariqa*, to them good food and merrymaking were asceticism, the forsaking of prayers, worship and an opposition to *Shari'a* was *Haqiqa*.[5] The 'ulama' and the sufis were the leaders of the community because of their knowledge and asceticism respectively, and their sermons led the misguided to the light. In the

[1]Shaikh Abu 'Abdu'llah Musharrafu'd-Din bin Muslih Sa'di of Shiraz, the author of the *Gulistan* and *Bustan* was one of the greatest Persian poets. His subtle refinement and amorous mystical approach to the problems of life made his works immortal among Persian poets. *Sa'di's Gulistan* mirrors his infinite humanitarianism, religious tolerance, mild scepticism and contempt for wealth.

[2]*Kanzu'r-Rumuz*, Ethé, 1830, f. 10a.

[3]ibid, f. 20a.

[4]ibid, f. 31a.

[5]ibid, f. 45a.

Zadu'l-Masafirin, Amir Husaini said:

'Hindu, who always worships idols,
Every morning makes invocations.
On his tongue there is nothing but Thy *zikr*,
Brahmanical thread he wears and the names he takes are only intermediaries.
All these are part of his religion and faith,
In reality he sees nothing in his faith but Thou.'[1]

Among other well-known disciples of Shaikh Sadru'd Din was Maulana Husamu'd-Din who migrated to Bada'un and lived there until his death. He appears not to have had many disciples, however, the people of Bada'un gave him the title, Maulana of Multan.[2]

Of Shaikh Sadru'd-Din's disciples, Shaikh Ahmad-i-Ma'shuq was an interesting personality. He was a native of Qandahar where his father was a merchant. Ahmad-i-Ma'shuq was an alcoholic. Often he would accompany his father on business trips to Multan and on one such trip Shaikh Sadru'd-Din happened to pass by a shop where Ahmad-i Ma'shuq was conducting business. The Shaikh sent a servant back to the shop and requested Ahmad to come to see him. Ahmad came to his house where the Shaikh drank part of a glass of sherbet, and offered the rest to Ahmad. After drinking the cooling liquid, Ahmad-i Ma'shuq underwent an intense spiritual enlightenment. He became Shaikh Sadru'd-Din's disciple, distributed his property to dervishes and for seven years, having withdrawn totally from the world, remained completely engrossed in meditation. In the latter part of his life, Shaikh Ahmad-i Ma'shuq was so often in a state of ecstasy that he even abandoned obligatory prayers.[3]

Shaikh Salahu'd-Din Dervish, another outstanding disciple of Shaikh Sadru'd-Din, was a contemporary of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq. He apparently became the Shaikh's disciple while still extremely young and lived to an old age. In the reign of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq he migrated to Delhi from Multan, and began living near Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Chiragh-i Dihli. He strongly opposed the Sultan, and unlike Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din, was not humble and forbearing[4] towards the political powers of his time.

The successor of Shaikh Sadru'd-Din was his son, Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din Abu'l Fath. The latter's mother was a most pious lady, and Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya prophesied his prominence while he was still in his mother's womb. His grandfather's favourite, at the age of four,

[1]*Zadu'l-Musafirin*, Ethé, 1832, f. 8b.
[2]Jamali, pp. 137-38.
[3]Jamali, pp. 129-31.
[4]*AA*, pp. 66-67.

Ruknu'd-Din donned Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din's turban, and although his father objected strongly, Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din approved of the child's action. After Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din succeeded his father, he wore the same turban and Shaikh Sadru'd-Din's *khirqa*.[1]

In the reign of Sultan 'Ala'u'd-Din Khalji, Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din visited Delhi twice. The Sultan himself went to welcome him and rode back with him to the city. During each visit he paid 200,000 *tankas* at the Shaikh's arrival and 500,000 *tankas* at his departure. The Shaikh always distributed the entire amount among Delhi's population and naturally his visits were a source of great jubilation to the people.[2]

Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din had great affection and respect for Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' and often said that he visited Delhi mainly to see the Shaikh. His three visits to the capital during Sultan Qutbu'd-Din's reign were, however, sponsored by the Sultan who wished that Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din's presence might eclipse that of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya'. But the close friendship between the two great Shaikhs frustrated the Sultan's hopes and he could not arouse the tiniest jealousy between them. During these three visits, Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din regularly called upon Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya'.

On Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din's first visit to Delhi, during the reign of Qutbu'd-Din', Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din received him in advance. Later they met after morning prayers in an inn near Hauz-i 'Ala'i. The Sultan asked Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din who, amongst the dignitaries of Delhi had met him first. Unhesitatingly the Shaikh replied that the leading figure amongst the élite was the one who had met him first, that is, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din.[3]

During his second visit, Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din met Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din in the Kilukhari mosque where the latter always went for Friday prayers. He then went to Ghiyaspur to see the Shaikh at his *jama'at-khana*. Although Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din had a serious problem with his leg, he ordered his men to lift him from his palanquin so he could show his respect for Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din, but the latter prevented him from doing so. Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din sat by the palanquin and they began to talk. Shaikh Maulana 'Ilmu'd-Din,[4] a brother of Ruknu'd-Din, initiated a discussion by asking why the Prophet Muhammad had emigrated from Mecca to Medina. Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din answered that some of the achievements of Muhammad's prophethood had depended mainly on this migration. Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din added that he believed the Prophet had been ordered to migrate so that some Medina saints who were unable

[1]Jamali, p. 141.
[2]Jamali, p. 142.
[3]*SA*, p. 136.
[4]The *Siyaru'l-Auliya'* gives the name of Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din's brother as Maulana 'Imadu'l-Millat wa'd-Din Isma'il. *SA*, p. 137. 'Imadu'd-Din seems to be his title. *Voyages D'Ibn Batoutah*, III, p. 323.

to travel to Mecca, should have been blessed with his presence.

On the palanquin there was a pile of papers. Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din mentioned that they were petitions from the needy and had been given to him so that he could recommend them to the Sultan. The petitioners did not realize that he was in fact planning to visit Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din, the Sultanu'l-Masha'ikh (the Sultan of the sufis). Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din's servant, Iqbal, presented Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din with several pieces of fine cloth and a purse of gold coins from his master, but the latter would not accept them and asked his brother, Maulana 'Ilmu'd-Din to accept them instead.[1]

According to Jamali, whenever Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din went to the court of Sultan Qutbu'd-Din, the people of Delhi would place petitions inside the Shaikh's *takht-i rawan* (a type of palanquin similar to a moveable throne). The court was entered after passing through three vestibules; the Shaikh would travel through the first two on his palanquin, and would then be greeted by the Sultan in the third. He would be taken inside where the Sultan would squat respectfully at his feet. The petitions would then be brought in and, after having read them, the Sultan would write sympathetic replies. According to a sufi tradition, the Shaikh would remain at court until all the requests had been granted.[2]

A visit to Delhi by Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din, described as his fourth, seems to have taken place in the reign of Sultan Ghiyasu'd-Din Tughluq. It was the tenth Zu'lhijja, the day when pilgrimages to Mecca were performed. Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' was ill. Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din decided instead to visit the Shaikh in order to gain from him the blessings of a *hajj*. He also visited the Shaikh during his final illness and urged him to pray for his own recovery so that the people of Delhi might continue to reap the spiritual benefits emanating from his presence. But the Sultanu'l-Masha'ikh replied he had seen the Prophet Muhammad in a vision and had been summoned by him. Deeply distressed, Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din farewelled him for the last time.[3]

After the Shaikh's death, Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din remained in Delhi and went to receive Sultan Ghiyasu'd-Din Tughluq at the village of Afghanpur, about five miles from the city. He lunched with the Sultan in a specially constructed palace and left to perform afternoon prayers at the suggestion of Muhammad bin Tughluq, the Sultan's son. After the Shaikh left, the palace collapsed and Sultan Ghiyasu'd-Din was crushed to death under its roof.[4]

Unlike his relations with the Chishti sufis of Delhi, those between Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq and Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din were most cordial. In 1327–28, Bahram Aiba Kishlu Khan, the Governor of Multan,

[1]*SA*, pp. 137-38.
[2]Jamali, p. 143.
[3]*SA*, pp. 141-42.
[4]*Voyages D'Ibn Batoutah*, III, p. 213.

headed a revolt against Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq. The Sultan rushed to Delhi from Deogir where he had been crushing another rebellion. Marching towards Multan he was met by Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din. The Sultan kissed the Shaikh's feet and he in turn prophesied victory. The battle took place near Abuhar. In a ruse to confuse the enemy the Sultan placed Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din's brother, Shaikh 'Imadu'd-Din, who closely resembled himself, under the royal canopy. 'Imadu'd-Din was killed, and the rebel army began to plunder the royal camp believing the Sultan to be dead. Muhammad bin Tughluq's forces ambushed the rebels, killed Bahram, and easily defeated the rest of his troops. The Sultan awarded Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din one hundred villages for the upkeep of his *khanqah*. But the 'ulama'[1] and the people of Multan were the target of his fury. He flayed the Qazi alive and ordered a general massacre of the population. According to 'Isami, Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din retreated into meditation for seven days, while the inhabitants were massacred; and emerging from isolation, he then interceded with the Sultan in an effort to save further lives.[2] This story, however, would appear apocryphal. Barani says the Shaikh approached the Sultan soon after he learnt of his intention to massacre the population, and that the Sultan relented on his request for clemency.[3]

Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din's fame reached as far as Alexandria, being spread by merchants who visited Multan, and Ibn Battuta was recommended to see him.[4] In 1333, after reaching Multan Ibn Battuta stayed with one of the Shaikh's disciples, and it is recorded that he had an interesting conversation with Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din, which extended even to political matters.[5] Following the tradition set by his father and grandfather, the Shaikh's *khanqah* was a busy rendezvous for distinguished visitors from many countries west of the Indus.

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq mentions a number of works containing the teachings of Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din, including his *Malfuzat*; none of these however still exist. Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din exhorted his disciples to abandon cruelty, oppression, avarice and greed, as he believed such vices rendered human beings to the level of beasts. Self-purification came only through humility and prayer. He reminded his followers of the following Qur'anic verse:

> 'I do not exculpate myself. Lo! the (human) soul enjoineth unto evil, save whereon my Lord hath mercy. Lo! My Lord is Forgiving and Merciful.'[6]

[1] *Voyages D'Ibn Batoutah*, III, pp. 217, 303.
[2] *Futuhu's-Salatin*, p. 443.
[3] *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, p. 479.
[4] *Voyages D'Ibn Batoutah*, III, p. 102.
[5] ibid, pp. 201-13.
[6] *Qur'an*, XII, p. 53.

According to Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din, purification of the self in the final analysis depended on divine grace, and he used the following verse to support his view:

> 'Had it not been for the grace of Allah and
> His mercy unto you, not one of you would ever have grown pure.' [1]

Moreover, to him the mark of divine grace and mercy emanated from an insight into one's faults.[2]

An anecdote related by Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Chiragh Dihlawi expressively depicts the ideological differences between Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din and his Chishti counterparts.

> 'When Shaikhu'l-Islam Ruknu'l Haqq Wa'd-Din visited Delhi, qalandars and *jwalqis* would make demands of him, the former requesting sherbet and the latter, money. The Shaikhu'l-Islam would satisfy them and remark: "The leaders of the community should possess three things. Firstly, they should have property in order to satisfy their demands. If a dervish did not possess money how could he satisfy a qalandar when he asked for sherbet. These people would abuse him and be punished on the day of resurrection. Secondly, the leaders should have knowledge in order that they might have scholarly discussions with 'ulama.' Thirdly, they should be endowed with *hal* (mystical enlightenment) so that they might impress dervishes."'

Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din added that money was not necessary—only knowledge and *hal* were essential.[3]

Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din died in 735/1334–35. According to Jamali, his nephew, Shaikh Isma'il, succeeded him.[4] Ibn Battuta says that Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din nominated his grandson, Shaikh Hud, as his successor, but his nephew challenged the claim. The dispute was laid before Muhammad bin Tughluq who gave his verdict in favour of Shaikh Hud. After some time, the governor of Sind accused Shaikh Hud of misappropriating the income of Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din's khanqah for his own personal use. The Sultan ordered the governor to seize the entire property and the Shaikh was reduced to a miserable condition. He planned to flee to Transoxiana. When the Sultan discovered the plan he had Shaikh Hud executed on a trumped-up charge of attempting to mastermind a Mongol invasion of India, using as a war-cry the ill-treatment of Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya's descendants by the Sultan.[5]

[1] *Qur'an*, XXIV, 21.
[2] *AA*, p. 64.
[3] *KM*, pp. 74-5.
[4] Jamali, p. 147.
[5] *Voyages D'Ibn Batoutah*, III, pp. 303-07.

This marked the end of the prosperity of Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya's khanqah in Multan. The Suhrawardi *silsila*, however, started flourishing in other areas, while Multan became a mere shadow of its former glory.

Among the disciples of Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din, the most interesting was Shaikh 'Usman Sayyah of Sunnam. The son of one Qazi Wajihu'd-Din, in his youth he had been a petty official. He met Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din near Kilukhari when the latter was performing prayers on the banks of the Jumna. Finding him promising, the Shaikh enrolled him as a disciple and took Shaikh 'Usman to Multan. There he was taught the *'Awarifu'l-Ma'arif* and memorized the Qur'an.

After becoming Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din's disciple, Shaikh 'Usman became a great ascetic, owning nothing but a loin-cloth. With his *pir's* permission, he departed on a pilgrimage to Mecca without carrying even the basic necessities of a pilgrim—a staff and a water pot. He remained in Mecca for about a year and then continued travelling to other places for a further six years. Returning to Multan, he was given the honour of being presented with Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din's own garment and turban. However, he didn't remain in Multan for long and departed for Delhi. His *pir* advised him to visit Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' often while there, and to accept any advice he might offer.

Shaikh 'Usman and Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din became firm friends. During his stay in Delhi, through his association with the Chishti order, 'Usman developed a great interest in *sama'*. At the same time, Sultan Ghiyasu'd-Din Tughluq issued strict orders prohibiting musicians from singing at *sama'* gatherings or elsewhere. One day, Shaikh 'Usman persuaded Amir Hasan, the Shaikhu'l-Masha'ikh's favourite *qawwal*, to sing for him. As soon as the music started, the Shaikh fell into an ecstasy and Hasan began to sing louder. When the *khanqah* doors were unlocked about 200 *qawwals*, and a large number of sufis, were standing outside. They set off to Tughluqabad about three miles away, singing and dancing. When they reached the Sultan's palace, he was extremely angry at such blatant defiance of his orders. On being informed that the party was headed by Shaikh 'Usman, he ordered that the list of the persons who had received gifts from Khusraw Barwar, be brought. If the name of Shaikh 'Usman was on the list this would have given the Sultan a chance to discipline him. To the Sultan's surprise, Shaikh 'Usman had not accepted any money. Highly impressed, Sultan Ghiyasu'd-Din Tughluq invited the Shaikh and the singing *qawwals* to his palace where he entertained them lavishly. Shaikh 'Usman refused to accept any of the gifts offered.[1]

It appears that Shaikh 'Usman did not leave Delhi during the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq, and died there in 738/1337–38.

[1]Jamali, pp. 144-46; *Kalimat*, pp. 144-45.

Chishti and Suhrawardi ideologies and practices

There was no apparent rivalry between the Chishti and Suhrawardi saints. An early sufi tradition based on the example of the Apostles in the Apocryphal New Testament, had to wisely divide different regions of the sub-continent into spheres of their respective spiritual influence and to refrain from interfering with those of others. The early Chishti preceptors were scholars, but they did not commit their ideas to writing and the Suhrawardi manual, the *'Awarifu'l-Ma'arif*, was the only text book used by all sufis. The works of the Suhrawardi, Qazi Hamidu'd-Din Nagauri, aroused the interest of all Chishti *pirs* and were read with interest.

Jama'at-khanas were an integral part of Chishti khanqahs and were designed to provide hostel accommodation for a large number of dervishes. Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din defined a *khanqah* as a place of worship and prayer[1] but in reality the purpose of *jama'at-khanas* was identical. The Chishtis, however, preferred to call their hostels *jama'at-khanas*, as they were generally thatched assembly halls. The early sufi records, particularly those stories relating to Chishti Shaikhs, indicate that the *jama'at-khanas* were connected to the living quarters of the *pirs*. In Chishti mystic literature both words, *khanqah* and *jama'at-khana*, are interchangeable. In contrast, the Suhrawardis built impressive *khanqahs*.

They accepted state patronage, received huge gifts from merchants and artisan guilds, and treasured riches as future assets. The food in Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya's *khanqah* was abundant, but was offered to only a select few. Often the Shaikh ordered his servants to pay fixed amounts in charity to those he considered deserving and only the sum he specified was paid.[2] Qalandars were intolerable to Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din but the attitude of his grandson, Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din, was different. He tolerated them as he considered that their persistent demands and those of other visitors justified sufi Shaikhs possessing wealth.

Chishti *jama'at-khanas* were open to all. Yogis, qalandars, and others were allowed free access. The Chishtis offered food to all guests and, if necessary, did not hesitate to sell their few miserable belongings to pay for it. If they had nothing to offer, a glass of water would be presented accompanied by their apologies.

Both the Suhrawardis and the Chishtis sought to achieve the sufi goal of *jana'* and *baqa'* or *fana 'an al-fana'* (annihilation beyond annihilation) as defined by masters such as Junaid, Ghazali, Abu Sa'id bin Abi'l Khair and 'Ainu'l-Quzat Hamadani. Like Ghazali they believed there were mysteries beyond the stages of *fana'* and *baqa'* but members of both orders preferred to refrain from its expression.

Members of both these orders strove to surrender their souls to God's will and to achieve a perfect union between the will of the mystic and that

[1] *KM*, p. 238.
[2] *FF*, p. 151.

of the divine. This was to be achieved by a total expulsion of everything from the mind, except of God.

The *Wahdat al-Wujud* of Ibn al-'Arabi was introduced to India through the Suhrawardi, 'Iraqi, however, by this time had not yet penetrated deeply into Chishti or Suhrawardi ideology. Until the mid-fourteenth century mystic ideas had been cast in the mould of the *'Awarifu'l-Ma'arif* and other earlier sufi classics. The mystic spiritual experience of life with God rested entirely on love, which was opposed to both the philosopher's reason and the jurist's wrangling. Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din advocated that within the realm of love there must be both trinity and unity, that is, 'Lover, Love and Beloved are all one,' and Shaikh Hamidu'd-Din wrote *'Ishqiyya* in this vein. These, however, were expressions of ecstasy rather than an advocacy of the *Wahdat al-Wujud.* Their source was the *Tamhidat* of 'Ainu'l-Quzat Hamadani.

Both orders trained their followers to pursue the conventional mystic path, which began with *tauba* (repentance), under the guidance of a *pir* (preceptor), and involved a complete submission to the divine will. The differences between the two orders lay in their distinct rituals and ceremonies and, more significantly, in their attitudes to society and politics.

The opposing views of the mystics life themselves were responsible for the differences in rituals. The Suhrawardis sought to perfect themselves through *salat* (Islamic prayers) and *zikr*. To them fasting in the month of Ramazan was sufficient. Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya was a lively host and followed literally the Qur'anic injunction: 'eat of what is pure and act righteously.' Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din Tabrizi advised a sufi to eat three times a day and to use the strength gained from the food for prayers and abstention from sin.[1] By contrast the Chishtis supplemented *salat* with hard ascetic exercises and fasting. In order to avoid making fasts a regular habit, the Chishtis often fasted on alternate days. They were required to reduce their diet considerably. Penance, austerity, self-mortification, meditation and contemplation were an integral part of Chishti life; contacts with yogis added a new dimension to *zikr* and involved the strenuous co-ordination of limb movements and postures associated with alternate exhalation and inhalation. During *zikr*, there was a concentration on the utterance of the first part of *al-kalimat at-tayyiba* (the blessed phrase) or the phrase of *shahada* (testimony), *la Ilaha Illa'llah*. *Sama'* was an indispensable part of Chishti rituals. It sharpened mystical sensitivity, and the trance-like state or ecstasy known as *hal* offered the spirits and hearts of its participant's mystical experiences which could never be gained through *salat* or *zikr*. The Suhrawardis discouraged *sama'* but were unable to reject it totally. Many eminent Suhrawardis indulged in it enthusiastically. Jalalu'd-Din Tabrizi lived in the company of a handsome slave boy in order to stabilize his ecstasy. However, it

[1] *FF*, p. 226.

would appear that the use of *sama'* by the Suhrawardis was generally not permitted in Multan.

From the time of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya', celibacy became a desirable aspect of Chishti discipline. The prophet Muhammad had been married and had often been involved in rivalry amongst several of his wives whom he had married for various political reasons. Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din, however, favoured celibacy. He believed that marriage was permissible for a sufi, but that celibacy called for a degree of determination and was therefore preferable. If someone was totally absorbed in divine contemplation so as to control all sexual desire, his eyes, tongue and limbs would inevitably be protected from sin, and therefore he would need to marry. But if a sufi was unable to become totally engrossed in meditation and obliterate the sex drive, he should marry. The essence of mystic contemplation was found in the heart. If a man was completely absorbed in God, the effect would permeate his entire body, but if his heart was disturbed by other things then the reaction would be felt throughout his whole being.[1]

It seems that to Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' his celibate state presented no difficulties, but to Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Chiragh-i Dihli, who also chose celibacy, his continuing sexual desire prompted him to eat *sambhalu* leaves and citrous fruits, and to drink excessive amounts of lemon juice.[2]

The preliminary requirement for the *zikr* of a Chishti disciple was to imagine that his Shaikh was personally present before him, directing his contemplation. The practice amounted to a belief that the Shaikh's spirit was divine both in its emanation and power. It was the apparent deification of the Shaikhs and the Chishti practice of kissing the feet of, and prostration before *pirs*, that shocked their orthodox opponents. *Sajda* or prostration is an act of worship in which a man's forehead touches the ground. In a chapter in the Qur'an, entitled *Al-Sajda*, the fifteenth verse contains the following sentence: 'Only those believe in Our revelations who, when they are reminded of them, fall down prostrate and hymn the praise of their Lord, and they are not scornful.'[3]

The practice was not invented by the Indian Chishtis. It was even sanctioned by Shaikh Abu Sa'id bin Abi'l Khair who argued that prostration was designed to show humility before the Shaikh[4] and that this invariably raised the spiritual status of the disciple. Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din

[1] *FF*, p. 171.

[2] *SA*, p. 241; *AA*, p. 81.

[3] XXXII, p. 15.

[4] The following anecdote is a very important case in point. On one occasion Shaikh Abu Sa'id was riding on horseback and a disciple who was walking came and kissed the Shaikh's knee. The Shaikh ordered him to kiss even lower, until he kissed his foot. The Shaikh ordered him even lower so he kissed the horse's hoofs. But the Shaikh was not satisfied until he had kissed the ground. Thereupon he remarked that he had ordered the disciple to kiss lower and lower so that he might gain in spiritual status. Although the source of this story is a late one, it is typical of Shaikh Abu Sa'id's teachings, *FF*, p. 228.

Auliya' believed the practice should cease, but found himself unable to oppose the traditions followed by Shaikh Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki and Shaikh Faridu'd-Din, who had both permitted prostration. He related to his disciples the example of Maulana Burhanu'd-Din Nasafi, who was both a scholar and a sufi, and accepted a disciple on three conditions only: He should take only one meal of his choice, missing the second; he should not be absent from instruction for a single day; and if he were to meet his teacher outside the house, the disciple should not kiss his hand or feet but greet him with the words *Salam alaik*[1] (peace be with you). However, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din defended the practice of prostration, as can be seen in the following story.

> 'In days gone by a holy man who had returned from a visit to Syria and Turkey came to see me. At the same time Wahidu'd-Din Quraishi came to me and placed his head on the ground in accordance with the custom of the servants. The visitor shouted at him reminding him that *sajda* was forbidden. He began to press his point... and I said "Listen! Do not try to show your superiority. When the obligatory character of any act is cancelled, it continues to remain recommendatory. In the past, fasts on the days of *baiz*[2] and *'ashura*[3] were obligatory. During the time of Prophet Muhammad the fasts of the Ramazan month were made obligatory and the fasts of the days of *baiz* and *'ashura* were no longer enforced but their recommendatory character remained. As to *sajda*, in ancient communities the practice was recommended in the same manner as subjects prostrating themselves before rulers, or pupils before their teachers. Religious communities performed *sajda* before their Prophets. In the days of the Prophet Muhammad, *sajda* was halted. Its obligatory character disappeared but its recommendatory character remained.... Although *sajda* is not obligatory it is not illegal. There can be no question of prohibiting what is legally permitted."[4]

The argument was unconvincing and the Shaikh's disciples continued to prostrate themselves. Amir Hasan urged that those who performed *sajda* before Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya', crushed the arrogance of their lower selves, elevating their spirituality. The Shaikh had been made holy by God; his eminence was not derived from a disciple's obeisance.[5] Again Amir Hasan argued that the Shaikh's disciples were prompted

[1] *FF*, p. 173; *AA*, p. 77.
[2] The twelfth and thirteenth, or according to some the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth days, from the new moon which are the brightest.
[3] The tenth of the first Muslim month, Muharram.
[4] *FF*, p. 174.
[5] *FF*, p. 173.

to seek initiation because of their love for him, and to lovers, prostration was a very common way of showing respect.[1]

Some argued that there was a distinction between *sajda*, designed to show respect, and the *sajda* of worship, and that the former was valid. Another form of expression was the placing of the head on the ground and in this instance the word *sajda* was not used. However, the orthodox were also unsatisfied with this form, as prostration was made in the same way in both cases. Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Chiragh-i Dihli made a slight compromise by saying that placing the forehead on the ground before created beings was not permissible, but one could kiss the ground with the lips.[2] Unlike the first type of prostration, the forehead did not touch the ground and therefore the letter of the law was not violated.

Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya did not encourage his disciples to perform *sajda*. They greeted him with: *as-salam alaikum* (Peace be with you). He also expected his disciples to finish their obligatory religious duties first and to greet him afterwards. But in the Chishti khanqah, the situation was different. Amir Hasan argued that if a disciple was performing supererogatory prayers and his *pir* passed by, the disciple should abandon them to kiss the *pir's* feet. Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din, however, disagreed and believed that prayers should be finished first.[3]

Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya was concerned only with the élite and it is unlikely that people visited his khanqah for faith cures. By contrast, the Chishti *jama'at-khanas* were filled with people wanting amulets. Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki advised his disciples to write the different names of God or Qur'anic verses on amulets and give them to those who requested them. Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' related that even a hair from the beard of Baba Farid was used by him as an amulet. He continued:

> 'One day I was sitting with Shaikh Faridu'd-Din. A hair from his beard fell on his lap. I requested the Shaikh to give it to me so that I could preserve it as a *ta'wiz* (amulet). He ordered me to do so. I... kept the hair in a piece of cloth and brought it to Delhi. That hair embodied a great blessing. Whenever a sick person approached me for an amulet, I gave the hair to him. He would keep it for a few days and be cured. Once my friend Taju'd-Din Multani's child became ill. He approached me for the amulet. I had placed the hair in a niche but I could not find it.... My friend returned disappointed, and his son died of the illness. After a few days someone else approached me for the amulet, to my surprise it was in its usual niche.'[4]

[1] *FF*, p. 228.
[2] *KM*, p. 157.
[3] *FF*, p. 243.
[4] *FF*, pp. 73-74.

The moral of this story is that the hair could not be found as the child was destined to die.

The Chishtis encouraged people to indulge in trade and commerce for their livelihood. They also approved of agriculture and the pursuit of crafts. However, these occupations were to be followed honestly and were not permitted to interfere with spiritual exercises. Both the *Fawaidu'l-Fu'ad* and the *Khairu'l-Majalis* relate interesting stories about these professions. An anecdote of Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din presents the idea that many cultivators had previously possessed spiritual power. To illustrate his belief he told this story: In the days of Hujjatu'l-Islam Ghazali there was a cultivator who could attain ecstatic states and perform miracles. If he wished, it rained, if he did not, it was dry. When (Imam) Ghazali heard of the man's supernatural powers he went to visit him and to receive his blessings. (Imam) Ghazali was introduced to the cultivator, who had no idea of the visitor's importance. The cultivator was sowing seed. His fellow cultivator asked if he could sow the seed instead, to enable the man to speak to (Imam) Ghazali. The cultivator replied, however, that while sowing he constantly thought of God, that this action he hoped would bless the grain for whoever ate it and the strength gained from it would then be used for prayer. But if someone new was allowed to sow, he might perform the act differently and in this way lose the blessings.[1]

A further sufi story about merchants involved Khwajgi Khujandi, a friend of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' and a merchant from Delhi. Khwajgi sold coarse cloth for the use of dervishes, and did not trade in expensive cloth as used by the Turks and the military. Even this had made him very rich. On one occasion one of his bales of cloth sank in the flooded Jumna. Sailors and others present failed to recover it, but Khwajgi Khujandi was not upset as he said that he had paid *zakat* (alms given according to Muslim law, by way of purifying or securing a blessing to all of one's possession) on the goods so he would not lose anything. A few days later the bale was discovered in the middle of weeds, the contents spouting in the water.

On another occasion a prophecy by Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' restored Khwajgi Khujandi's purse which had been stolen by his slave. Whenever Khwajgi left his house he used to give something to the beggars he met and drop sugar and sesame seeds into ant holes.[2]

Another anecdote of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' strongly advocated honesty and fair dealing in business. He believed a merchant should never lie about the price paid by him for any article, but should specify the correct price and be satisfied with a small profit which, in the long run, would make him rich. The *Fawa'idu'l-Fu'ad* went to the extent of ascribing the destruction of Lahore, by the Mongols in 1241, to the

[1]*KM*, pp. 156-57.
[2]*KM*, pp. 183-84.

profiteering of its merchants, and the following story illustrates this point. A group of Lahore merchants visited Gujarat to do some trading. These merchants quoted the Hindu traders of Gujarat prices that were twice as much as was reasonable, and sold some items at this exorbitant price and others at half the quoted price. The local Hindus were unaccustomed to such business dealings. They always quoted the correct price and did not haggle. Some Hindu merchants asked whether such business ethics were customary in Lahore, and when this was affirmed, they prophesied that a town where such dishonesty was rife, would be soon destroyed.[1]

Although the story does not specifically state it, the implication is that the Lahore merchants were Muslims. Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' was unhesitating in his praise for the honesty of the Hindu merchants of Gujarat, in spite of the fact that merchants were the sufis' main source of *futuh*. Thus Sultan 'Ala'u'd-Din Khalji, who ruthlessly suppressed profiteering and black-marketing was, to the Chishtis the ideal ruler. On the authority of Qazi Hamidu'd-Din Maliku't-Tujjar (head of the merchant guilds), Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din told his disciples that the Sultan had introduced price control for the welfare of his subjects.[2]

The prosperity of Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya's khanqah depended mainly on gifts from merchants and trade guilds, for even local governors were often short of funds. As many merchants traded outside India, to a large extent, they were independent of the government and could not be prevented from giving *futuh*.[3] The same source supplied *futuh* to the *jama'at-khana* of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya'. Sultan Qutbu'd-Din Mubarak Shah Khalji was led to believe that his *amirs* and *maliks*, or high officials, offered *futuh* to the Shaikh, in spite of the fact that he had refused to accept anything from the Sultan. The latter forbade his officials to visit the *jama'at-khana*, hoping that the Shaikh's charities would cease and members of the *jama'at-khana* would starve to death. When the Shaikh learned of the Sultan's action he ordered the expenditure of the *jama'at-khana* to be doubled. This so shamed the Sultan that he admitted he had misunderstood the Shaikh.[4] Many gullible Muslims, however, continued to believe that the Shaikh's funds came from other than earthly sources.

Many highly successful merchants exchanged their comfort and wealth for the hard life of a dervish. One of these was Saiyid Muhammad bin Mahmud of Kirman, the grandfather of Amir Khwurd.[5] Such total

[1] *FF*, pp. 130-31.

[2] *KM*, pp. 240-41.

[3] In 1241, when Tayir Mongol invaded and devastated Lahore, the Muslim merchants of the town refused to cooperate with the governor of the fort in resisting the Mongols as they traded in Khurasan and the Turkistan region and had obtained passes from them to continuing trading safely. *Tabaqat-i Nasiri*, p. 393.

[4] Jamali, p. 75.

[5] *SA*, p. 208.

rejections of the material world for life in a Chishti *jama'at-khana* greatly enhanced the order's standing in the community. However, according to Chishti merit could be found in government service. When a member of the civil service, a *danishmand* (scholar), complained that his duties gave him no leisure to visit friends, Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din told him that his position gave him an opportunity to serve mankind.[1]

Baba Farid's favourite son was a soldier in Balban's army and some distinguished disciples of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' for example, Amir Khusraw and Amir Hasan, were notable members of the government. On the whole, however, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din believed in a strictly observed non-involvement in politics and the administration. He approvingly told Amir Hasan, how Khwaja Hamid, a servant of Tughril, whom Balban later appointed governor of Lakhnauti, resigned the service and became Baba Farid's disciple.[2]

As an overall policy Chishti saints were opposed to government service on the basis that it made people authoritarian, reckless, greedy and cruel and that it involved a great deal of dependence on worldly authorities and was therefore contrary to the sufi trust in God. Although government service could be the most effective instrument to relieve the misery of the common man, the Turkic bureaucracy itself was ruthless and overbearing.[3]

Chishtis refused to accept land grants either from rulers or their officers as this also tended to compromise them in their attempts to maintain complete independence from all powers other than God. Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' related a story of a saint, Shaikh 'Ali, who one day was engaged in mending his *khirqa*, sitting on the floor with his legs stretched out before him, when he was visited by the Caliph. He continued to mend his *khirqa* and his greetings were formal. The Caliph's chamberlain (*hajib*) urged Shaikh 'Ali to fold his legs, but the latter refused to heed the request. At their departure, the Shaikh seized the Caliph's, and the chamberlain's hands, saying that he had closed his fists and therefore did not need to cross his legs. This implied that the Shaikh had never asked anything of either of them, and was therefore completely free.[4]

Political conditions in India during the 13th and 14th centuries contributed a great deal towards reinforcing the Chishti policy of aloofness from rulers and their officials. Iltutmish, a far-sighted Sultan, was conversant with the mystic traditions of Bukhara, and from early childhood had been devoted to dervishes. In order to maintain a balance between the power of the 'ulama' and the Turkic military oligarchy, he supported the sufis. After Iltutmish's death, however, the wars of succession resulted in the supremacy of the 'ulama,' for they changed sides according to self

[1]*KM*, p. 13.
[2]*FF*, pp. 217-18.
[3]*KM*, pp. 104-05.
[4]*FF*, p. 9.

interest, and generally managed to support the victor. Shaikh Badru'd-Din became a victim of this power struggle as has already been mentioned. However, Baba Farid, through his total rejection of government patronage, averted the crisis threatening the Chishti order and succeeded in convincing his disciples that the wisest course was not to accept any form of land grant. Holiness could only be obtained, said the Baba, by ignoring princes.

But non-involvement in government service was not compulsory for ordinary disciples, and applied only to *khalifas*. According to Baba Farid, association with rulers and noblemen was disastrous for spiritualists[1] but that those who were connected with the government in some way were in the overwhelming majority. This would indicate that the Chishtis believed the Sultanate was not necessarily evil. Their attitude to it was similar to Ghazali's, who advised Muslims to obey unquestionably whoever seized power as this was indispensable for the preservation of government, law and order. The verses recited by Baba Farid before Ulugh Beg, reminded him of Firidun's previous rule of justice and advocated a high degree of tolerance. In advising him to appoint a God-fearing vizier, Baba Farid possibly had in mind the Saljuqid vizier, Nizamu'l-Mulk Tusi.

Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' is reported to have informed Sultan 'Ala'u'd-Din Khalji that being a dervish he was unconcerned with government affairs, and instead was occupied in praying for and the welfare of the Sultan and his people.

The fact that Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' accepted enormous gifts given to him by Khusraw Barwar would tend to imply that the Chishtis were unconcerned with the source of the gift provided it was paid in cash. The Shaikh's reply to Sultan Ghiyasu'd-Din, when asked to return cash given to him by the previous ruler, is revealing. It indicates he believed that money belonging to the treasury should be spent on the Muslim community. This was his justification for accepting gifts from princes like Khizr Khan, and from other government officials. The gifts were immediately distributed and without them the Chishtis would have not been able to assist the poor. They in fact saw themselves as instruments for the amelioration of the conditions of the average Muslims.

To Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din, evil people were given rulers of the same ilk, and those who were virtuous were blessed with pious and wise kings. This ancient Indian and Iranian belief was sanctified by a *Hadis* attributed to the Prophet Muhammad, that rulers were appointed to people as they themselves deserved.[2]

The conflict between Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq and the leading *khalifas* of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' was provoked by a misunderstanding on both sides. By rejecting the Sultan's proposal to migrate to

[1]Counsel to Sidi Maula, *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, p. 209.
[2]*KM*, p. 52.

Daulatabad, they were not necessarily following the traditions of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' who had previously told Sultan 'Ala'u'd-Din that he was unconditionally prepared to leave Delhi if his stay in the capital was unacceptable to the Sultan.[1] The Shaikh appointed an outstanding *khalifa* to 'Ala'u'd-Din's army which was involved in an invasion of Chanderi and blessed the Deccan campaign. Earlier Chishti saints managed to avert political crises but the contemporaries of Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din did not have the same success. The final conflict was precipitated not by the cruelty of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq, for he was extremely generous to many sufis, but by the activities of the Delhi Chishtis who during his reign appeared to be associated with members of the 'ulama', hostile to government policies.

Although both Suhrawardi and Chishti sufis believed in the Ghazalian concept of the state, there was a notable difference in their attitude to the duties of rulers and the administration in regard to religion. The Suhrawardi view of the function of the state, envisaged by Nuru'd-Din Mubarak Ghaznawi, encompassed the prosperity of the Sunni élite alone; the non-orthodox Sunnis, Shi'is and Hindus were permitted to survive, provided they did so in a deprived economic condition. This concept was an unimaginative replica of the ideas of Nizamu'l-Mulk Tusi,[2] and ignored the situation of the Muslims at that time in India.

The Chishtis believed that governments should strive for the prosperity of the whole empire. Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' illustrated this point by quoting the following story. During the Caliphate of 'Umar, Iraq was invaded, the king was captured and brought before the Caliph. The latter offered to make the king ruler of Iraq if he became a Muslim. At his refusal, an executioner was summoned. The Iraqi King requested water to quench his thirst before his death. The King rejected water from a glass tumbler, and 'Umar ordered gold and silver ones to be brought. The King requested an earthenware tumbler. When it was brought, he asked to be allowed to live until after he had drunk the water. This was granted, and the King immediately threw the pot on the ground breaking it and spilling the contents, at the same time making it impossible to drink the water. Impressed at his ingenuity, the Caliph spared the King's life. Under the influence of an ascetic to whom he had been entrusted, the ex-King of Iraq converted to Islam. The Caliph offered him his former kingdom, but the King asked only for one desolated village. None, however, could be found. 'Umar had taken a kingdom, said the King, in which there was not one poor village and if the situation changed, he would be required to give an explanation to God.

As this story illustrates, to the Chishtis the state was morally bound

[1]*SA*, p. 134.

[2]*Siyasat Nama*; translation in Hubert Drake, *The book of government or rulers for kings*, London, 1960, pp. 164-65.

to care for the well-being and prosperity of all its people.[1] Tax collectors they believed should show consideration in acquiring revenue and in levying the poll tax.[2] It is therefore not surprising that Delhi's prosperity in 'Ala'u'd-Din's reign made him an ideal ruler to Chishtis.[3]

The Suhrawardis, as depicted in the legend surrounding Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din's activities in Bengal, were unhesitating in their enforced conversion of Hindus to Islam. By contrast, the Chishtis believed that only the company of pious and ascetic Muslims prompted others to accept Islam, and neither the sword nor preaching served any purpose. The Chishtis were interested in various yoga practices, particularly those connected with breathing, and refused to force Hindus to renounce their faith. To them, their main mission was to work for the integration of those Hindus who embraced Islam for political and economic reasons, in an attempt to make them genuinely pious Muslims and save them from emulating the example of the racist and élitist Turkic governing classes.

The Firdawsiyya

The Firdawsiyya order was part of the collateral line of the Suhrawardiyya. Khwaja Badru'd-Din Samarqandi, the founder of the *silsila* in India, settled in Delhi after Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki had migrated there.[4] The Firdawsis, however, were unable to make a mark in Delhi. Late in the fourteenth century they established themselves in Bihar, a move which was to prove most successful.

The *silsila* traced its spiritual descent from Shaikh Saifu'd-Din Bakharzi,[5] an eminent disciple of Shaikh Najmu'd-Din Kubra. According to Jami,[6] Shaikh Saifu'd-Din became Najmu'd-Din Kubra's disciple after completing the education of an *'alim*. Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' gives the following account of Bakharzi's conversion to sufism. In his youth, relates Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din, Shaikh Bakharzi was an inveterate enemy of sufism, strongly condemning its followers at his public lectures on theology. Despite opposition from his disciples, Shaikh Najmu'd-Din attended one of Shaikh Bakharzi's lectures. Seeing Shaikh Najmu'd-Din, Shaikh Bakharzi became quite eloquent in his condemnation of sufism. Shaikh Najmu'd-Din appeared to be impressed by the discourse. At the end of the lecture, the Shaikh left the mosque where it had been held and inquired as to why that sufi (Bakharzi) had not followed him. Bakharzi

[1] *FF*, pp. 196-97.
[2] *FF*, pp. 150-51.
[3] *KM*, p. 241.
[4] Shah Shua'ib, *Manaqibu'l-Asfiya'*, p. 340. The book was published as a continuation of the *Maktubat-i Sadi*, Lucknow, 1287/1870, pp. 335-58; *KM*, p. 185; *Kalimat*, p. 159.
[5] In the tenth century, Bakharz also known as Guwakharz was a famous town south of Jam on the river Hari.
[6] *NU*, pp. 430-31.

started screaming and tearing his clothes and then fell at the feet of the man who was to become his *pir*. As Shaikh Najmu'd-Din's disciple, Bakharzi proved to be devoted and humble. Shaikh Najmu'd-Din sent him to Bukhara and prophesied his future fame in that city.[1]

Berke (1257–67), the Mongol Khan of the Golden Horde, who was a grandson of Chingiz Khan and the ruler of Transoxiana, was converted in Bukhara by Saifu'd-Din Bakharzi.[2] The statement by Minhaj Siraj, the author of the *Tabaqat-i Nasiri* that Berke was brought up from infancy as a Muslim,[3] is hardly feasible. It appears he was prompted to embrace Islam for political considerations, in an effort to set himself apart from his Shamanist and Buddhist brethren in Iran, China and Central Asia. This enabled him to reorganize the Tatars through a process of Islamization and resulted in a unified force with which he could fight his rivals, the Mongol Ilkhans of Iran, who were Shamanists or Buddhists. In spite of such expediency, the Muslims tended to see Berke's conversion as a triumph for Islam. Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Mahmud refers to him by both his pre-Islamic name, Khar Banda, and his Islamic one, Khudabanda, adding that the Prince embraced Islam after having had a vision in which Shaikh Bakharzi appeared to him and suggested he become a Muslim.[4]

Shaikh Bakharzi continued to lecture on theology even after adopting sufism. Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din told the story that on one occasion a snake appeared while Shaikh Bakharzi was speaking to an audience. Members of the group rushed to kill it but the Shaikh prevented them from doing so, saying that the reptile also wished to listen to the words of a sage.[5]

Shaikh Saifu'd-Din Bakharzi died in 658/1260.[6] It appears that he sent one of his disciples from Samaqand, Khwaja Badru'd-Din, to settle permanently in Delhi. Relations between Khwaja Badru'd-Din and the Delhi Chishtis were amicable. Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din relates that Khwaja Badru'd-Din and Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' constantly visited each other. The Khwaja was very fond of *sama'* and each *'urs*, or death anniversary of Shaikh Saifu'd-Din Bakharzi was celebrated with great enthusiasm by them both. Food was freely distributed from Chishtiyya and Firdawsiyya *langars* and dervishes assembled in large numbers. The date of Shaikh Badru'd-Din's death is unknown but probably it was during the reign of Sultan 'Ala'u'd-Din Khalji for Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din refers to the Khwaja in the context of the Delhi affluence in that period.[7]

[1] *FF*, pp. 268-69; *see KM*, pp. 180-81.

[2] Jean Richard, 'La Conversion de Berke et les débuts de l'Islamisation de la horde d'or', *Revue des études islamiques*, XXXV, Paris, 1967, pp. 173-84; *The Sufi orders in Islam*, p. 91.

[3] H.G. Raverty, *Tabaqat-i Nasiri*, Delhi, 1970, pp. 1283-85.

[4] *KM*, p. 181.

[5] *KM*, p. 181-82. Similar stories are ascribed to Shaikh Abu Sa'id bin Abi'l Khair. *Asraru't-Tawhid*, pp. 108-11.

[6] *NU*, p. 432.

[7] Jamali, p. 83; *KM*, p. 185.

Apparently the Khwaja had migrated to Delhi as a youth and survived to a ripe old age.

Khwaja Badru'd-Din was succeeded by two *khalifas*, Khwaja Ruknu'd-Din (who lived near Kilukhari), and Khwaja Najibu'd-Din. The two sons of Shaikh 'Imad, Ruknu'd-Din's successor, were so envious of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' that they even condemned him publicly. Their insolence was reported to Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' by his disciples, and the Shaikh retaliated by relating an incident from the life of Baba Farid. That famous Chishti saint had given a gift to a dervish and then ordered him to go away. He would do so, answered the dervish, on condition only that the Baba gave him his comb, adding that the Baba would in turn be blessed with prosperity. Baba Farid replied that he had thrown in the river whatever prosperity was wished on him. Going to bathe in a neighbouring shallow river, the dervish was drowned. Just as Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din finished the story, news arrived that the sons of 'Imad Firdawsi had been drowned. Apparently one had gone to bathe near the *langar* and had started to drown. Going to his aid, the second brother had also been swept away by the current. Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din's disciples were recorded as ascribing the incident to miraculous elements emanating from their *pir*.[1] However, the story of the cause of the death of the dervishes and the sons of 'Imad is incompatible with more factual evidence which depicts the kindliness of both Baba Farid and Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya'.

Najibu'd-Din Firdawsi preferred to lead the quiet life of an ascetic, however, his disciples made him famous. One of these, Maulana Faridu'd-Din, in 777/1375–76, compiled a book on Sunni jurisprudence called the *Fatawa-i Tatar Khaniyya*.[2] The most outstanding of all the disciples was Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din Ahmad Yahya' Munyari[3] whose ancestors had settled in Bihar in the early thirteenth century.

The Shaikh's own name was Ahmad, his father's Yahya', and he was given the title, Sharafu'd-Din (Glory of the Faith). Born at the end of Sha'ban 661/early July 1263, the Shaikh's education began on traditional lines with the learning of elementary books on grammar and the simpler lexicons. Later in life he regretted what he believed to be the futility of such a non-spiritual education, wishing instead he had devoted the time to memorizing the Qur'an.

When Ahmad was about fifteen or sixteen, Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din Abu Tawwama passed through Munyar *en route* to Sunargaon in Bengal. It was during the reign of Balban, and the reasons for Abu Tawama's emigration to the distant east are shrouded in mystery. He came from Bukhara, having obtained an excellent religious education. According

[1]*KM*, pp. 202-03; Jamali, pp. 83-4; *Kalimat*, pp. 160-61.

[2]Tatar Khan was a noble of Sultan Firuz Shah's reign.

[3]This town is now known as Maner or Muner but the *Sharaf Nama-i Ahmad Munyari* rhymes only when the last word is read as Munyari or Manyari.

to the *Manqib al-Asfiya'*, Abu Tawwama left Delhi because of Sultan Balban's jealousy at his popularity with the people of that city. A more probable explanation is that he aroused the envy of the local 'ulama'; he was a newcomer, who no doubt had succeeded in stealing their religious limelight.

Shaikh Abu Tawwama's visit to Munyar opened up new opportunities for the young Ahmad's education. Accompanying Abu Tawwama to Sunargaon, Ahmad settled there with his teacher's family. Gradually the town became a centre of Islamic learning in Bengal, attracting many scholars. Ahmad appears to have been unswervingly devoted to his studies; the *Manaqibu'l-Asfiya'* relates that to prevent being distracted he refused to even read family letters. According to some versions of this text, Abu Tawwama married his daughter to Ahmad, but others relate that he married in Munyar after his return from Sunargaon. This he did on medical advice.[1] In Sha'ban 690/July 1291 Shaikh Yahya' died and Ahmad left for Munyar to be with his aggrieved mother. After seeing his mother Ahmad set off for Delhi to visit Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya', however the Shaikh did not initiate Ahmad into his discipleship.[2] Afterwards Ahmad went to Panipat but found Abu 'Ali Qalandar (*d.* 724/1324) to be so often engrossed in ecstasy that he was unsuitable as a teacher. Finally he became the disciple of Shaikh Najibu'd-Din Firdawsi and was himself given written authority to enrol disciples. Shaikh Ahmad objected to this privilege on the ground that he was unqualified, after only a few days, to accept such responsibility. His decision had been based on divine inspiration, answered Shaikh Najibu'd-Din, and asked Shaikh Ahmad to leave for Munyar.[3]

According to the *Akhbaru'l-Akhyar*, Shaikh Ahmad, who will now be referred to as Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din, practised arduous ascetic exercises in the forests near Agra.[4] It would appear, however, that these were performed in Rajgir,[5] in Bihar. The figure of twelve years for the length of his stay in these forests is mythical, as this was the standard period used to describe prolonged mortifications performed in lonely forest areas. Gradually, as his existence in Rajgir became known, he received many visitors. To reduce these disturbances he would come to Munyar each Friday for congregational prayers, returning to the forest afterwards. Maulana Nizam Madani, a disciple of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya'

[1] *Manaqibu'l-Asfiya'*, pp. 339-40.

[2] According to the *Akhbaru'l-Akhyar*, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' had died and Shaikh Ahmad then contacted Shaikh Najibu'd-Din Firdawsi who welcomed Shaikh Ahmad saying that for years he had been awaiting Ahmad's arrival. The story of the *Manaqibu'l-Asfiya'* seems more authentic as it incorporates family traditions.

[3] *Manaqibu'l-Asfiya'*, pp. 340-41; *Kalimat*, pp. 161-62.

[4] *AA*, p. 118.

[5] Ancient Rajagriha, the early home of the Buddha and the capital of ancient Magadha is now near Patna in Bihar. It is surrounded by five hills. The town abandoned by the Muslims was allowed to become a dense jungle.

who was greatly attached to Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din, built a small *khanqah* for his use while in Munyar. Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din accepted the gift, but referring to the *khanqah* stressed that his friends had forced him to sit in the temple of an idol.

During the early period of his reign, Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq ordered Zainu'd-Din Majdu'l-Mulk, the *muqta'* of Bihar, to build an imposing *khanqah* for the Shaikh and assign the *pargana*,[1] Rajgir, to pay the expenses. Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din reluctantly accepted the offer for he feared, if he refused, Majdu'l-Mulk might suffer from the Sultan's wrath. The Shaikh's reluctance was not founded on any ideological tradition of his *silsila*, but sprang from his own ascetic temperament. In this respect he was more of a Chishti than a Suhrawardi. Nevertheless a lavish function was organized by the *muqta'* to inaugurate the *khanqah*. The Shaikh took his place on a Bulgarian prayer mat which the Sultan had sent as a gift.[2] The Shaikh, however, remained unimpressed. Uninterested either in his new *khanqah* or the imported prayer rug, he said to one of the assembled dervishes that he considered himself unworthy even of Islam, but felt he had no choice but to accept such favours.[3]

Throughout the reigns of Muhammad bin Tughluq and Firuz Tughluq, the *khanqah* of Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din Munyari was a rendezvous for the many who sought a spiritual life. When questioned, he discussed subjects mainly concerned with sufism, however, he also spoke on theological issues. Like the Chishti saints, his teaching method was based on an anecdotal format. But it was the Shaikh's letters to his disciples which show his real impact as a teacher. The appreciation of Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din's collected letters by contemporary Chishti and Suhrawardi sages, and also by later generations, was well deserved. His other books were also an important contribution to sufism; they indicate he was a gifted scholar and that his study of all theological and mystical subjects was very broad.

No conflict between Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq and the Shaikh has been reported in any relevant source. In fact, the *Adabu'l-Muridin*, which the Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din translated, quoted a saying from an eminent sufi named Khwaja Muhammad bin Sirin, indicating that he would pray for the Sultan if his prayers were answered, for he believed

[1]A revenue district comprising several villages.

[2]*Manaqibu'l-Asfiya'*, pp. 342-43.

[3]In a letter Husain Mu'izz Balkhi mentions that Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din returned the villages after a period of fifteen years. Saiyid Hasan 'Askari suggests that the *farman* granting the villages appears to have been returned during Sultan Firuz's visit to the Shaikh in 762/1360 when he called on the Shaikh during his second expedition against Ilyas Shah of Bengal. 'Historical Value of the Sufic Hagiographical works of the Sultanate Period.' *The Journal of the Bihar Research Society*, I-IV, January-December, 1966, p. 152. If the *farman* was returned, the most appropriate time for this to have taken place seems to be the period when the Sultan was alienated from the Shaikh, because of the latter's condemnation of the executions of two saints from Bihar.

a prayer for the ruler was a prayer for the welfare of the people.[1] The Shaikh wrote two letters to Sultan Firuz advising him to be impartial in dispensing justice. After relating some anecdotes and traditions of the Prophet's *Hadis*, he reminded Firuz of the Prophet Muhammad's injunction that an hour spent pursuing justice was far superior to sixty years of worship.[2]

However, Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din Ahmad was soon to be disappointed by Firuz's use of his judicial powers which led to the execution of the Shaikh's friends and fellow sufis, Shaikh 'Izz Kaku'i and Shaikh Ahmad Bihari. The two were outspoken in their ideas on the *Wahdat al-Wujud* and gave vent to their thoughts enthusiastically. The people of Delhi believed they were crazy and this, along with the fury of the 'ulama' at what they believed to be quite unacceptable, unorthodox Islamic beliefs, prompted Sultan Firuz to convene a *mahzar*. They were condemned in a *fatwa* issued by the 'ulama' and later executed; the author of the *Manaqibu'l-Asfiya'* exclaimed astonishment that this could occur without a major outcry from Delhi's many sufis and that the victims were not saved, even on the grounds of insanity.[3]

Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din's opposition to the executions was expressed in his surprise that a town which instigated and tolerated such killings remained standing and escaped destruction at the hand of God. When Sultan Firuz learned of the Shaikh's resentment he consulted the 'ulama' who advised him to summon Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din from Bihar to account for his conduct. A *farman* was issued authorizing this, but was cancelled at the request of Makhdum-i Jahaniyan Saiyid Jalal Bukhari.[4] The author of the *Manaqibu'l-Asfiya* ascribed the disintegration of Sultan Firuz's administration, fall of the Tughluq empire and the catastrophe that befell Delhi during Timur's invasion, specifically to the execution of the two sufis. However, the verdict of Muslim historians, both medieval and modern, is in favour of Sultan Firuz who is depicted as both a pious Sunni and a reformer king. It would, however, seem that the strong recommendations of Makhdum-i Jahaniyan, which the Sultan and the 'ulama' were unable to ignore, saved Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din from the

[1] *Sharh-i Adabu'l-Muridin*, Delhi, Persian, 48, India Office, f. 44b.

[2] *Maktubat-i Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din Yahya Munyari*, Ethé, 1844.

[3] *Manaqibu'l-Asfiya'*, pp. 338, 345-46. The *Futuhat-i Firuz Shahi*, compiled by the Sultan himself gives a slightly different version. According to it Shaikh Ahmad and his followers were atheists who misguided people in the name of solitude and renunciation. Some people in Bihar considered Ahmad to be God. It was alleged that Shaikh Ahmad taught that someone with nine wives (meaning Muhammad) could not be a prophet; Ahmad's disciples preached that God had appeared in Delhi in the form of Ahmad. The allegations against Ahmad Bihari and his associates were proved correct, and both were executed. His disciples were exiled to different towns. The accusations are typical of the kind of resentment shown by the orthodox against the *Wahdat al-Wujud* and did not necessarily have to be proved. *Futuhat-i Firuz Shahi*, Aligarh, nd., p. 8.

[4] *Manaqibu'l-Asfiya'*, p. 346.

axe. Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din died from natural causes on 5 Shawwal 782/2 January 1381.

Some of Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din's ideas are as follows:

He considered the perfect sufi to be a paragon of mercy and generosity to others. Such a dervish fed others, while he himself went hungry, went naked, giving clothes to others, and suffered stoically the cruelty and injustice meted out to him, while blessing those who abused him. A true sufi was fearless, as he had sympathy for all and his compassion was indiscriminate like the sun which shone on both enemies and friends alike.[1]

A sufi was marked by his self-abnegation, believed the Shaikh. According to him, a real sufi considered everyone virtuous except himself. He saw himself as unworthy of any reward either in this world or the next; all rewards promised in the Qur'an or *Hadis* were for others, while the threats remained for sufis. Humility was the distinguishing feature of a follower of the mystic path; he should be like the earth, upon which people walked.[2]

The following two stories charmingly show Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din's thoughtfulness and generosity to others. On one occasion, while observing supererogatory fast, the Shaikh was offered food from a visitor, which he ate. Expiation of a sin for breaking such a fast was possible, added the Shaikh, but there was no atonement for the sin of breaking someone's heart. Another story related that at a prayer meeting an inebriated man acted as Imam or prayer leader. To complaints that the man was a drunkard, the Shaikh replied that he probably only drank occasionally. When the people affirmed the man drank all the time, the Shaikh answered that no doubt he did not drink during the fasting month of Ramazan.[3]

Disciples of Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din were taught to be unceasing in their assistance to fellow Muslims. To him hundreds of prayers and days of fasting equalled a single act of kindness or assistance given to a Muslim, and such an action was modelled on the prophets who had helped to alleviate the suffering of the masses. A sufi's influence should be used as a weapon for the oppressed and the Shaikh used as an example his constant spate of recommendatory letters to an unsympathetic government official.[4]

Defining a Muslim, the Shaikh wrote that a Muslim was one who harmed another Muslim neither by hand nor by tongue. As the heart of a sincere Muslim was the home of God, one who broke a Muslim's heart, destroyed the house of God.[5]

Complaining of impiety amongst his contemporaries, Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din wrote that faith had become rare and, like the philosopher's stone,

[1] *Maktubat-i Sadi*, Kanpur, 1911, letters no. 24.
[2] ibid, letters no. 27, 31.
[3] *Manaqibu'l-Asfiya*, p. 349.
[4] ibid, p. 349.
[5] ibid, p. 347; *Ma'danu'l-Ma'ani*, Bodleian, 1263, ff. 72b.

the faithful were nowhere to be seen. A tradition of the Prophet related that a true follower of Islam was unusual and at the end of the world the same situation would exist. To the Shaikh, this was in fact happening during his own lifetime,[1] and the dominance of impostors and their followers augured to him the end of the world.[2]

The greatest heretic of all, believed the Shaikh, and the real source of all evil was the *nafs*. As it was unlawful to cooperate with *kafirs*, so also the primary duty of every Muslim was the waging of constant war against the baser parts of the human nature. It was not *jihad*, argued the Shaikh, against non-Muslims which was the real war, but that against the *nafs-i kafir* (the heretical *nafs*) of one's own lower self.

To his disciples, Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din Munyari prescribed severe ascetic exercises. These endowed those who performed them with super-natural powers like the Hindu yogis who walked on water and flew like birds. The Shaikh believed that these exercises made Christian monks superior even to yogis—they were able to receive spiritual inspiration and to read thoughts.[3] To him, however, these achievements were not the essence of sufism.

Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din's many letters outline his ideas on subjects like *tajrid* (solitude) and *tafrid* (renunciation). His beliefs were exemplified by his own life. *Tajrid* involved complete severance from everything connected with the world and was the act of giving away everything one owned. On the other hand *tafrid* entailed a breaking away from oneself, representing a lack of concern for the future and a total freedom from any inner anxiety. Seclusion was two-sided; one aspect consisted of an external separation from the world in which the face was turned towards the wall and laid at the divine threshold, the second was an internal one in which the heart was purified from any thoughts other than those of God and it was attained by a radical reduction of actions involving the body.[4]

Shari'a and *Tariqa* were also subjects on which Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din wrote copiously. To him observance of *Shari'a* was essential to a spiritual life. The path of *Shari'a* was seen in the prophets whose teachings were based on divine revelation. In reality the mission of all prophets was identical: they invited their people to follow what was essentially the same religion and a belief in divine unity. The second function of prophets was to teach obedience to God. As spiritual physicians, they prescribed rules of conduct for their own people in accordance with the divine command. These rules were the *Shari'a*. Treading the road of the *Shari'a* was giving obedience and submission to all; such rules amounted to Islam and remaining firm in the practice of *Shari'a* was *din* (faith). A

[1] *Maktubat-i Sadi*, no. 25, *Maktubat-i Yahya Munyari*, Ethé, 1844, Letter nos. 103, 123.
[2] *Maktubat-i Sadi*, no. 26.
[3] ibid, no 27.
[4] ibid, nos. 61, 62.

wide road, *Shari'a* had many other routes leading from it. One such path was the *Tariqa* which in fact was a quest for the rules of the *Shari'a*. An example of the latter was the purification of clothes at prayer time, but the cleansing of the heart from the impurities of human weaknesses was submission to the *Tariqa*. Ablutions before prayers was the rule of the *Shari'a* but the *Tariqa* required one to be in a permanent state of cleanliness. Facing Qibla at prayer-time was the *Shari'a*, but directing the heart to God was the *Tariqa*. Seking the *Tariqa* without the *Shari'a* was like climbing to a roof without steps. Religion guided a soul's journey from the 'world of humanity' (*nasut*) to the celestial and angelic kingdom (*Malakut*) and then to 'the world of divine omnipotence' (*Jabarut*).

The claim of the externalist 'ulama' that the *Haqiqa* and the *Shari'a* were identical was, according to the Shaikh, quite misguided. Heretics believed that the *Haqiqa* could exist without the *Shari'a* but this view deserved condemnation. The correct position was that the *Shari'a* was subject to change, but the *Haqiqa* was immutable. The *Shari'a* involved human effort but the *Haqiqa* was a divine gift. The *Shari'a* was the body and the *Haqiqa*, the soul; one could not exist without the other.[1] External felicity depended on the love of God but the same could not be attained without obedience to the *sunna* (laws) laid down by the Prophet Muhammad which were to be strictly followed.[2]

In a letter Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din wrote that there were some sufis who found the *Shari'a* superfluous. They claimed it was the road leading to divine unity that was significant and as they had already reached their own goal they were therefore not required to perform prayers. The main purpose of prayers to them was to dispel negligence from the heart and make it totally attentive to God. As they had already acquired those qualities there was no use in offering prayers. To the Shaikh this was the line of *Iblis* (the Devil) who had refused to prostrate himself before Adam,[3] and he believed this Qur'anic story to be a lesson for such misguided sufis.[4]

Although Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din strongly advocated dedicated adherence to the *Shari'a*, he failed to concede the superiority of the 'ulama' over sufis. To a suggestion by a scholar that the 'ulama' were indispensable, even to the greatest dervish, the Shaikh replied that the dervish who was dependant on the 'ulama' was not one at all. The contents of books was the sum total of the knowledge of the 'ulama', whereas sufis consulted the *Lauhu'l Mahfuz*[5] (Preserved Tablet), and if the answer was not there

[1] *Maktubat-i Sadi*, no. 17.

[2] ibid, nos. 17, 18.

[3] See *Qur'an*, II, 34; VII, 11-12; XV, 31-37; XVII, 61; XVIII, 50; XX, 116.

[4] *Makhubat-i Sadi*, no. 15.

[5] According to the *Qur'an*, the *Lauhu'l Mahfuz* denotes the *Qur'an* itself: 'Nay, but it is a glorious *Qur'an*; on the guarded tablet'. (LXXXV, 21-22). In *Hadis* and the theological works, the term is used in the sense of the tablets on which the decrees of God, with reference to mankind, were recorded.

they questioned God and received a reply directly from him.[1]

Letters from Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din repeatedly warned Muslims to protect themselves from the evil influence of the worldly 'ulama.' He defined them as those who thronged the courts of the sultans and their nobles hoping to enter government service by obtaining positions in the state judiciary. He illustrated the point with a story concerning a dervish who found the devil sitting idle. On being asked the reason for doing nothing, the devil replied that the worldly 'ulama' had taken his place and there was no work left for him to do. When specifying the main point of difference between the spiritual 'ulama' (*'ulama'-i akhirat*) and the worldly 'ulama', the Shaikh said that the former were not antagonistic to each other while the worldly 'ulama' quarrelled over a hundred different issues. He concluded the discussion by quoting the following verse:

> 'Dispute and discussion behove the mosque corners.
> But in the assembly of the Friend,
> Cries like those of the intoxicated are befitting.'[2]

The Shaikh implored his disciples to tread the spiritual path directed only by a perfect guide. The absence of a *pir* turned seekers of the mystic path into philosophers, materialists, heretics, *mu'tazila*, *ibahatis*[3] and the like. The perfect *pir* saved his disciple from indulging in such heretical beliefs as *hulul* (the incarnation or infusion of God into a creature) and *ittihad* (the identification of the divine with the universal nature).[4]

The Shaikh defined a perfect *pir* as one to whom the following verse from the Qur'an could be applied:

> 'Then found one of Our slaves, unto whom
> We had given mercy from Us, and had taught
> him knowledge from Our presence.'[5]

To Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din the verse depicted five different methods through which one could become a perfect *pir*: firstly, as a slave of God who did not depend for his existence on any one but Him; secondly, through a recognition of the impossibility of assimilating divine Reality without abandoning all human weaknesses (*bashariyyat*); thirdly, through an acceptance that divine mercy could not be received unless the seeker

[1] *Manaqibu'l-Asfiya'*, p. 346.

[2] *Maktubat*, Ethé, 1844, no. 2; *Ma'danu'l-Ma'ani*, ff. 25b-6b, 49b.

[3] *Ibaha* means permission to perform an act as one wishes to do so, however, it is also a term of abuse for sufis of antinomian leanings; it is not a Hindu sect as I.H. Qureshi believes. S.A.A. Rizvi, *Religious and intellectual history of the Muslims in Akbar's reign*, Delhi, 1975, pp. 14-6.

[4] *Maktubat-i Sadi*, no. 5.

[5] XVIII, 66. This verse relates to the section on 'Moses' travels in search of knowledge.'

created in himself the virtues which could be called divine; fourthly, in obtaining knowledge directly from God in order to obliterate all traces of knowledge acquired through reason, or the sense, and fifthly, in the acquisition of direct, divine knowledge involving a perception of the essence, attributes and action of the Divine. The crux of all these was to loose all human weaknesses, especially lust.

Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din appreciated that a novice could not be expected to decide the worth of different spiritualists but he suggested that in the heart of a pure seeker, the beauty of a perfect *pir* was reflected by a divine decree. The three states of the divine path, action, knowledge, and love, were experienced only by divine will.[1]

Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din explained in a letter that locks, moles, idols and Brahmanical threads etc., all which appeared in sufi poetry, were symbols designed to explain divine Reality.[2] The Shaikh avoided expressing his ecstatic feelings and mystical experiences and advised his disciples to keep their own knowledge of such experiences secret.

From the beginning of his career as a sufi Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din avoided conflict with administrative authorities and the tragic deaths of Ahmad Bihari and Kakui made him even more cautious. The Shaikh was deeply imbued with the thoughts of the *Wahdat al-Wajud* and drew on the ideas of Faridu'd-Din 'Attar, 'Iraqi and Maulana Jalalu'd-Din Rumi. The author of the *Manaqibu'l-Asfiya* relates that sufis who lived before Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din were unable to fully appreciate the subtle philosophy contained in the concept of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. He added that the explanation of *Tawhid* by 'Ainu'l-Quzat Hamadani was most profound.[3] The thoughts of Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din transcended the theory that the lover, the Beloved and love, were essentially one. Eloquent in his defence of Bayazid Bastami and Hallaj, he affirmed that the *Tawhid* of the *Tariqa* was the highest stage in the pursuit of the spiritual state.[4] Nevertheless, this did not mean *hulul* or *ittihad*. To Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din, *Tawhid* or the *Wahdat al-Wujud* was the fourth and final stage in the sufi journey, related to *Lahut* (the indescribable world of Unity). He went on to say:

> 'The fourth stage consists in the pouring forth of the Divine Light so profusely that it absorbs all individual existence in the eyes of the pilgrim. As in the case of the absorption of particles floating in the atmosphere in the light of the sun, the particles become invisible—they do not cease to exist, nor do they become the sun, but they are inevitably lost to sight in the overpowering glare of the sun—so, here, a creature does not become God, nor does it cease to exist. Ceasing to exist is one thing, invisibility is another.... When thou lookest

[1] *Maktubat-i Sadi*, no. 6.
[2] *Maktubat-i Bist-u Hasht, to Imam Muzaffar Balkhi*, Lucknow, 1870, pp. 36-9.
[3] *Manaqibu'l-Asfiya'*, pp. 336-37.
[4] ibid, p. 338.

through a mirror, thou dost not see the mirror, for thou mergest into the reflection of thy face, and yet thou canst not say that the mirror has ceased to exist, or that it has become that reflection, or that the reflection has become the mirror. Such is the vision of the Divine Energy in all beings without distinction. This state is called by the sufis absorption in monotheism. Many have lost their balance here: no one can pass through this forest without the help of the Divine Grace and the guidance of a teacher, perfect, open-eyed, experienced in the elevations and depressions of the Path and inured to its blessings and sufferings.... Some pilgrims attain to this lofty state only for an hour a week, some for an hour a day, some for two hours a day, some remain absorbed for the greater portion of their time....'[1]

The disciples of Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din

The Shaikh's biographers estimated that the number of his disciples exceeded 100,000, of which forty were respected as having achieved union with God. Of those who achieved this supreme state, Shaikh Muzaffar, Malikzada Fazalu'd-Din and Maulana Nizamu'd-Din were regarded as the most outstanding, with Shaikh Muzaffar the most prominent of this élite group.

Shaikh Muzaffar's ancestors came from Balkh. His father was the disciple of an eminent sufi of Bihar called Shaikh Ahmad Charm-Posh (One Who Wears Skins), a cousin of Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din. But his son, who had obtained a good religious education, decided to become Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din's disciple because of the latter's scholastic achievements. On his teacher's advice, Shaikh Muzaffar left for Delhi where he studied for two years, at the same time teaching in a seminary founded by Sultan Firuz. When a feeling of intense spiritual ecstasy seized him, he returned to Bihar. Sharafu'd-Din ordered him to act as a menial domestic at the *khanqah*, serving other dervishes so that the conceit which usually overpowered an *'alim* (which he had become through study), could be replaced by humility. Constant ascetic exercises in the seclusion of the *khanqah* made his body a mere skeleton of bones with little flesh. Impressed by his spiritual achievements, the Shaikh advised him that this life was no longer necessary and that he was free to live anywhere of his own choice. Shaikh Muzaffar moved from Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din's *khanqah*, but he strictly adhered to the sufi rule that whatever was received in charity should be given away the same day it had been obtained.

Through correspondence, Shaikh Muzaffar remained in touch with his *pir*. But he refused to allow others to see these letters from Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din Yahya'. About two hundred of them were said to have been buried in the grave of Shaikh Muzaffar, according to a directive contained in his will. A bag containing twenty-eight letters survived,

[1] *Maktubat-i Sadi*, no. 1; translation by P. Hardy in the *Sources of Indian tradition*, ed. by Wm. Theodore de Bary, New York, 1958, p. 424.

which were later compiled into a book-form and also published in 1870.[1]

After his *pir's* death, Shaikh Muzaffar, his brother, Shaikh Mu'izz, and the latter's talented son, Shaikh Husain, decided to go to Mecca on a pilgrimage, *via* Chittagong. By 798/1395–96, when they reached Bengal, the Ilyas-Shahi Sultan, Ghiyasu'd-Din A'zam Shah (1389–1409), was ruling. He had greatly improved trade and commerce, developed the port of Chittagong and established cultural and diplomatic relations with China. As we shall see in the next chapter, the relations of the Ilyas-Shahi rulers of Bengal with the Hindus were cordial and they occupied high posts in the government. The Sultan, however, also respected Muslim sufis and men of talent. He is known to have invited the great Persian poet, Hafiz of Shiraz, to migrate to Bengal. He welcomed the party of Shaikh Muzaffar and treated them as state guests. The Shaikh, however, was annoyed because of the delay by the administration in arranging their travel. To his great disappointment, many high posts were held by the Hindus. He addressed Sultan Ghiyasu'd-Din as his 'prosperous son' but reminded him to be holy and pious like Sultan Firuz Shah. In a letter the Shaikh wrote:

> '"This Sultan Firoz, may God forgive him his sins! had established association with many holy men. When for some days his holiness, Syed Jalalu'd-Din (Bukhari) may his resting place be blessed! came to him, he met him and derived many benefits from his association with the Syed and showed constancy and firmness in them. He had, however, developed a tendency that whatever he said in anger on matters of murders and retribution, before his orders could take effect, he admitted that they did not mean his command but something which he had hastily said by way of accusation in a fit of anger without due considerations. Then he enquired about the opinion and the 'Fatwas' of the Qazis, and the Muftis had to cite precedents after which he gave his award. He used to say 'Oh God! it is not the orders of your slave, Firoz, but thine command; the cannon laws of thine say so.' He learnt to say the 'Chasht'[2] or the morning prayer and 'Tahajjud' (night prayer) from the saintly saint after the latter's arrival (at Delhi from Uch, near Multan). When the Sultan grew old he took his residence in his newly built mansion and had it proclaimed throughout the city of Delhi that whosoever might have any grievance or claims against Firoz, the slave of God, might come and put forward his charges and claims which he would satisfy."'[3]

[1] *Maktubat-i Bist-u Hasht*, Appendix, pp. 36-9.

[2] Supererogatory prayers performed after breakfast.

[3] S.H. Askari, 'The correspondence of the fourteenth century sufi saints of Bihar with the contemporary sovereigns of Delhi and Bengal', *Journal of the Bihar Research Society*, March 1956, p. 183.

In another letter the Shaikh advised the Sultan that high government posts should not be given to Hindus and wrote:

> 'The Exalted God has said "ye who believe! take not into your intimacy those outside the ranks." The long and short of the matter is that in commentaries and lexicons they have said that the faithful should not make the unbelievers and strangers their confidants and ministers. If they say that they do not make them their favourites and friends but for the sake of expediency, the reply is that God says that it is not expediency but the cause of trouble and sedition. He says "La yalunakum Khabalan" (they will not fail to corrupt you), i.e. "*La yaqseruna* Ifsad-i-Amrekum" (they will not hesitate or spare themselves in creating troubles for you). Therefore, it is incumbent on us that we should listen to the divine command and cast aside our weak judgement. God says "Wadduna Ma Anittum" [may only desire (be) your ruin], i.e. when you make them intimate with yourself they will love to involve you in evil deeds. An infidel may be entrusted with some work but he should not be made Wali (chief supervisor or Governor) so that he may have control over and impose his authority on Muslims. God says "let not the believers take for friends or helpers unbelievers and neglect God: if any do that, in nothing will there be help from God except by way of precaution, that ye may guard yourselves from them. There are severe warnings in the Qur'an, the 'Hadis' and historical works against those who have given authority to the unbelievers over the believers. God grants opulence and provisions from unexpected sources, and He gives deliverance from them. "There is authoritative promise of provisions, victory and prosperity. The vanquished unbelievers with heads hanging downward, exercise their power and authority and administer the lands which belong to them. But they have also been appointed (executive) officers over the Muslims, in the lands of Islam, and they impose their orders on them. Such things should not happen."'[1]

About the end of 800/1397–98 or early 801/1398–99, the party left from Chittagong for Mecca. Shaikh Mu'izz died there as did Shaikh Muzaffar at Aden in 803/1400–01. Shaikh Husain returned to Bihar. His letters, quoted in the *Akhbaru'l-Akhyar*, are reminiscent of Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din's style. They are marked by a unique flavour gained from his understanding of the theories of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. In one letter Shaikh Husain pleaded that the main reason for conflict among people over the idea of God was the fact they were concerned with form. Those who transcended such ideas managed to reach God and see His Being, and were known as *muwahhid* or unitarians for they saw and

[1]ibid, pp. 186-87.

worshipped God alone. As such souls remained uninvolved in critical disputes, they were at peace with all.[1] Every spiritual effort should be directed towards attaining the Great Ocean and Limitless Light of God. Sufis should gain an insight into this so as to be rid of *shirk* (polytheism) and reject *hulul* and *ittihad*.[2]

Another important disciple of Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din was Qazi Shamsu'd-Din, an administrator of Chausa[3] in Bihar. His official duties prevented him from attending Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din's assemblies. At his request, in 747/1346–47, the Shaikh wrote him a hundred letters. Shamsu'd-Din's other disciples copied these letters and they have remained a popular collection. They cover a wide range of topics discussed by sufis, such as *Tawhid*, *tawba* (repentance) the need to please enemies, *pirs*, miracles, revelation, inspiration, *Shari'a*, *Tariqa*, *Haqiqa*, *zikr*, *tajrid*, *tafrid* etc. It would seem that these letters were intended to teach other disciples, spread throughout all of northern India, the spiritual truth and were carefully written in order to avoid reprisals from the 'ulama' and other externalists.

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the various volumes of Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din's letters were published under several titles. One compiler, Shaikh Zain Badr 'Arabi, was a very close disciple of the Shaikh. In 769/1367–68, he also compiled another collection of 151 letters of the Shaikh's, his first compilation. These letters were addressed to a number of important disciples as well as Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din's sons, Qazi Husamu'd-Din, Qutbu'd-Din, 'Abdu'l Malik and Fakhru'd-Din. Two letters were addressed to Dawar Malik, a son-in-law of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq, and two mentioned earlier, to Sultan Firuz.

The letters in Zain Badr's collections are franker and more expressive of Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din's ideas on the *Wahat al-Wujud* than those in the earlier collection. There is a strong ascetic streak throughout these later letters, and criticism of the 'ulama' is trenchant. Some important disciples, such as Maulana Sadru'd-Din, who had accepted the post of deputy *qazi*,[4] were reminded in unminced words that they had been ill-advised to embark on political careers and were in fact wasting their time.

A network of small *khanqahs* stretching from Bihar to Sunargaon and reaching many areas of India disseminated Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din's teachings, as embodied in his letters. A collection of the Shaikh's discourses, entitled the *Ma'danu'l-Ma'ani*, which was compiled by a disciple, also became a spiritual beacon to future generations of sufis. Other collections of the Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din's letters and *malfuzat* are mentioned in the bibliography.

[1] *AA*, p. 126.
[2] *AA*, pp. 128-29.
[3] Ethé, 1844, f. 193a.
[4] ibid, f. 123a.

Chapter Four

The Chishtiyya, Suhrawardiyya and Kubrawiyya Centres from the Fourteenth to the Sixteenth Centuries

New Chishtiyya centres began developing in India during the lifetime of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya'. Members of his army of disciples, whom he personally initiated, came from all over the country. He himself encouraged some of his leading disciples to settle in Devagiri, Chanderi and Bengal. By the time Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Chiragh-i Dihli died, his efforts to establish co-existence with the 'ulama' had ceased bearing fruit because of the controversy over the mystic philosophy of the *Wahdat al-Wujud.* This had been accepted with great fervour by the Chishtis who regarded it as the greatest of all developments in mystic thought. The 'ulama' girded their loins to suppress the doctrine and beheaded two Bihari sufis.[1] However, long before Timur's invasion in 1398–99 which accelerated the establishment of new Chishti centres throughout India, the *Wahdat al-Wujud* theory had become firmly rooted in the mystic soil of Delhi.

Delhi

The pioneer of Delhi's *Wahdat al-Wujud* movement was Mas'ud-i Bak. His real name was Sher Khan and his ancestors had migrated from Bukhara to Delhi. Mas'ud-i Bak was a relative of Sultan Firuz Tughluq and his many years as a high ranking government official had made him fantastically wealthy. Finally, a mystical experience prompted him to adopt asceticism and he began to live with sufis. Mas'ud-i Bak became a disciple of the Chishti, Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din, son of Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din. Although highly impressed with the personality of the Lamp of Delhi, Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din, he believed Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' to be his real teacher.[2] His outspoken dissemination of the *Wahdat al-Wujud,* in the form of both prose and poetry, made him hated by the 'ulama.' Contemporary sources fail to reveal this hostility and Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Huqq is also silent on the matter; however a later authority writes that Sher Khan was beheaded, on a *fatwa* from the 'ulama.'[3] There is no reason to doubt the validity of this statement for it was not unusual

[1]See, Chapter Three, p. 230. *supra,*

[2]Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din was the Imam of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' and a favourite of the great Shaikh. Kalimat, f. 156b; *Mas'ud-i Bak Mir'atu'l-'Arifin,* Ethé, 1854, f. 192a.

[3]Kalimat, f. 156b.

for the Sultan to find himself helpless in religious matters against the power of the 'ulama.' In the name of Islam and at the instigation of the 'ulama' the list of men this pious Sultan had killed was no shorter than that of Muhammad bin Tughluq who had had victims liquidated for political reasons, however earlier religious authorities tended to by-pass such details.

Mas'ud-i Bak wrote a work called the *Tamhidat*. It was based on the *Tamhidat* of the sufi martyr, 'Ainu'l-Quzat of Hamadan (492/1098–525/1131). The latter was written in 521/1127 and has now been published.[1] The *Tamhidat* of Mas'ud-i Bak cannot be traced. However the prose section of his *Mir'atu'l-'Arifin* and his *Diwan*, entitled the *Nuru'l-Yaqin*, still exist. The *Diwan* was a favourite text in Chishti khanqahs between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries and later sufis, both followers and opponents of *Wahdat al-Wujud*, drew on it heavily.

The *Mir'atu'l-'Arifin* is divided into fourteen chapters called *Kashfs* or Revelations. Like similar works on the subject, it begins by distinguishing between the *Shari'a*, *Tariqa* and *Haqiqa*. It goes on to explain the significance of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* and such associated controversial issues as *sahw* (sobriety), *sukr* (mystic intoxication), *mabda'* (beginning), *ma'ad* (resurrection), *wilaya* (sainthood) and *nubuwa* (prophethood). The author continues:

> 'The laws of *Shari'a* are based on *'ilm al-Yaqin* (knowledge through inference); the struggles of the *Tariqa* depend upon *'ain al-Yaqin* (knowledge through perception), and the acquisition of *Haqiqa* is a matter of *haqq al-Yaqin* (knowledge through intuition). The traveller on the path of *Shari'a* is the knower, the traveller on the path of the *Tariqa* is the perceiver and the traveller on the path of the *Haqiqa* is the taster. Thus *Shari'a* is learning, the *Tariqa* is burning and the *Haqiqa* is illumination. The devotee should firstly acquire the knowledge of the *Shari'a* and then burn himself on the path of the *Tariqa* and ultimately kindle the lamp of *Haqiqa*.'[2]

Describing the importance of *Iblis* or Satan, Mas'ud-i Bak believed that *La* (No) was the station of *Iblis*, and *Illa* (Except), the stage of the Prophet Muhammad. *Iblis* was the sentry at the door of the Divine and Muhammad was the keeper of the treasury of *Wahdat* or Unity. Unless one passed the guard the treasury could not be reached.

Mu'tazila says, Mas'ud-i Bak continued to believe that the vision of God was impossible, but to perfect sufis the idea of seeing anything other than God was absurd.[3] A true devotee did not concern himself with the differences between the seventy-two sects of Islam; instead he was

[1] Rahim Farmanish, ed., *Ahwal wa Asar Ainu'l Quzat*, see Chapter One, pp. 85-6, *supra*.
[2] *Mir'atu'l-'Arifin*, Ethé, 1854, f. 2b.
[3] ibid, f. 130a.

concerned with the illumination concealed at the door of the Divine, not the veil hiding it. The goal was all important to the seeker, not faith or sectarianism. To Mas'ud-i Bak faith was the vehicle by which the goal could be reached and *kufr* (infidelity) merely served to entangle one in extraneous objects which made the goal unobtainable. Self worship was worse than idol worship. One who worshipped oneself naturally neglected to adore God; one who ignored the self worshipped *Haqq*. The author argued by assuming that all names referred to the One Name, that in all forms, only the One Face was hidden and that in all religions only One Road was concealed. If the subtle truth of this path, gleaned from different forms, was to be understood, all the different religions would appear identical.[1]

A sufi disciple should not be attached to any particular sect, believed Masu'd-i Bak but adhere to the faith of his *pir*, in order to guarantee the attainment of his goal.[2] To him the *wali* (perfect sufi) was one who, during his spiritual progress, crossed to a stage of understanding in the relationship between the divine signs and different attributes, finally reaching the Essence of Being.[3] In a verse he cried:

> 'From Mas'ud-i Bak there disappeared all the human qualities
> Since he in reality was Essence, he ultimately became Essence.'[4]

Comparing the relations between prophecy and sainthood, Mas'ud-i Bak rejected the growing belief in the superiority of the saints over the prophets, and asserted that the former obtained their mystical progress only through obedience to the latter, saints themselves not possessing intrinsic spiritual eminence. Their relationship, believed Mas'ud-i Bak, could be compared to that between brightness and light. In his *Munajat* he sang:

> 'Oh God, Thou pervadeth the soul of every human being,
> The blackness of *kufr* doth emanate from Thee and
> Thou art the light of every faith.
> Thou maketh the Ka'ba an idol temple and converteth
> a tavern into a mosque.
> Thou art the faith of believers and the
> infidelity of a fire-worshipper.
> Idol worship, prayer, Ka'ba and fire-worshipper's temple,
> To me art identical for the essence of each faith art Thou,
> How long should I say I am Thou, for only
> Thou existeth and not Mas'ud.

[1] *Mir'atu'l-Arifin*, Ethé, f. 160a.
[2] ibid, f. 163a.
[3] ibid, f. 169a.
[4] *Nuru'l-Yaqin*, II, Rieu, 632, f. 44a.

In reality I do not recite these verses,
Thou reciteth them.'[1]

A contemporary of Mas'ud-i Bak, Saiyid Muhammad Husaini bin Ja'far al-Makki, was an equally important figure in the sufi world. His long life extended from the reigns of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq (1325–51) to that of Sultan Bahlul Lodi (1451–89). In the reign of the former Amir Ja'far, who had been given the title Amir Kabir (Great Amir), was a *muqta'* in Cambay and an officer of 1,300 horsemen. Muhammad Husaini, decided to ignore a worldly position which his father's influence could procure and become a sufi. He was initiated into the Chishtiyya order by Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Mahmud Chiragh-i Dihli. Most humbly, he served his *pir*, even cleaning with his beard the *istinja*[2] clay of his preceptor instead of rubbing it on wood or a floor to make it smooth.

Before his death in 1356, Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Chiragh-i Dihli permitted Shaikh Muhammad Husaini to travel to other parts of the Islamic world. Firstly he visited Hansi where he stayed with Shaikh Qutbu'd-Din Munawwar. Apparently Husaini reached Ghazna sometime in 789/1387–88 and spent the following twenty years travelling to all the corners of the Islamic world, including Khurasan, Palestine, Damascus, Iraq, Mecca and Medina, Egypt and the Islamic West. In 809/1406–7 he was in Balkh and on his return to India Husaini visited all the important towns in northern and southern India. Settling in Delhi about 820/1417–18 he attracted a number of disciples to whom he corresponded about his mystical experiences. The first letter in the *Bahr u'l-Ma'ani* is dated 10 Safar 824/14 February 1421 and the last, the thirty-sixth, is dated 27 Muharram 825/21 January 1422. Ja'far Husaini claimed to have met at least 380 sufi saints during his travels. He was deeply concerned with religious chauvinism and the narrow pride exhibited by all religious communities in the world.[3]

Dwelling on the idea that the paths to God were as numerous as human souls, Ja'far Husaini classified the latter into three. The first were the common Muslims whose right path was a scrupulous observance of the *Shari'a*, although he believed that the true goal could not be obtained from this path. To the second category belonged people who performed hard ascetic exercises with a view to purifying the self and the heart, and to changing their natural disposition. This path was an inward-looking one and was for the holy and the pious alone. The third group included the spiritual élite who had reached the stage of understanding the *Lahut*.[4] To reach the third category one began with *tauba* (repentance) then moved towards *zuhd* (asceticism) which involved the voluntary abandonment

[1] ibid, f. 4a. For a biographical note *see AA*, pp. 168-72.
[2] Cleaning the private parts after passing urine.
[3] Ja'far-i Makki Husaini, *Bahru'l-Ma'ani*, Ethè, 1867, f. 163b. [4] ibid, ff. 150b-51a.

of self. What was considered to be unlawful at this stage was a love of pleasure at the expense of service, in this world, and its anticipation in the next. The third stage was *tawakkul* (trust) and it involved the severance of all connections and attachment with the worldly and the mundane. The fourth stage was *qana'at* or contentment in which everything that impeded attaining the goal to the Beloved should be hated. Not a single particle of love other than that for God should be hidden in the heart. The fifth stage was *'uzlat* (self-seclusion). This involved closing the doors of the heart to thoughts other than the Beloved. *Uzlat-i Zanana* (female self-seclusion) was the closing of the inner self but *'uzlat-i Mardana* (male self-seclusion) was the association of the outer self with people and the inner self with contemplation. The sixth stage was *zikr* (recollection). This was also intended to expel thoughts of anything other than God. The negative (*la-Ilaha*) aspect of *zikr* was intended to purge the evil of the *nafs-i ammara* and the positive (*il'allah*) was meant to flood the heart with divine guidance. The seventh stage related to *tawajjuh* (turning of the face towards God), featured a total indifference to all sorts of desires. The eighth stage, *sabr* (patience), was like the third stage and required mystics to close their eyes to the enjoyments of both worlds and to remain permanently chained to divine Love. The ninth stage was *muraqaba* (contemplation) which involved the achievement of complete composure following the purification of the heart and the self. It was here that sufis awaited the opening of the gates of divine mercy. *Riza* (satisfaction) was the tenth and final stage and the highest point of the mystic journey. Earlier stages depended on choices made by the sufi himself but now the choice was the Beloved's. The first nine stages required voluntary abandonment of something men were compelled to leave after their deaths anyway, but the stage of *Riza* was a gift from God.[1]

According to Ja'far Husaini, the ecstatic cries of Bayazid and Hallaj did not emanate from themselves; their spiritual absorption had converted them into the same form as the Being. Whatever they said was spoken by God.[2] Ibn al-'Arabi objected that if Bayazid and Hallaj had obtained *Tajalli-i Zat* (Theophany of Being) they would never have cried out *Subhani* (Glory be to me!) or *Ana'l-Haqq* (I am the Creative Truth). Theophany of Being involved self-effacement and the latter stage failed to distinguish between 'I' and 'Thou.' They had then reached the stage of the *Tajalli-i Sifat* (Theophany of Attributes). He himself, Ja'far added, was prompted to make such dangerous statements.[3]

Defining *kufr* Ja'far said that in its common form it contradicted the *Shari'a* but in its most significant aspect it was the worship of the carnal soul. According to him, all externalists were involved in this type of

[1]Ja'far-i Makki Husaini, *Bahru'l-Ma'ani*, Ethé, 1867, ff. 154b-55b.
[2]ibid, f. 37a.
[3]ibid, f. 88a.

infidelity.[1] Unless a true perception of *kufr* was gained, a realistic understanding of Satan was impossible. Disputes relating to *kufr* and *iman* (faith) were merely related to two veils. As long as a seeker remained involved in wranglings over the two, he was unable to understand God. The seeker should be neither a *kafir* (infidel) nor a Muslim, but a lover, and an axis around which both *kufr* and *iman* revolved.[2]

According to Ja'far Husaini, the real explanation of the Qur'an was esoteric. To him such famous commentators, as Zamakhshari,[3] had been unable to penetrate the spirituality contained in the Qur'an and had merely concerned themselves with irrelevant semantics.[4] Ja'far Husaini believed that he himself had spent many years mastering the works of *Fiqh* and this had kept him as far removed from the real faith as a dog from a mosque. The 'ulama' who became experts in the *Hidaya* and *Usul al-Bazdawi* occupied themselves by writing *fatwas*, but in reality were ignoramuses. Forcefully Ja'far Husaini called externalists 'robbers of the faith' who worshipped instead their carnal souls. To him *taqwa* (piety) was the all-consuming passion of the pious 'ulama.'

Ja'far Husaini gave no credit to the recitation of the *kalima*. He believed that conversion occurred in the following five circumstances: 1. fear of death; 2. fear of the enslavement of one's family; 3. the preaching of Muslims; 4. the desire for stipends and booty; and 5. the bigotry of ancestral religions. Such conversions, therefore, were superficial. The new Muslims recited *kalima* to gain merit in this world, never becoming truly spiritual and like the 'ulama' plunged themselves into the abyss of ignorance.[5] This situation was illustrated by the following verse from the Qur'an:

> 'As for those who disbelieve, their patrons are false deities.
> They bring them out of light into darkness.'[6]

Ja'far Husaini was opposed to the strong prejudices against 'Ali of Indian Sunnis. If someone repeated 'Ali's name twice, said Husaini, it was sufficient to be called a Shi'i. He believed that the Righteous Caliphate ended with 'Ali, therefore, his successors were usurpers and that it was misguided[7] for the Sunni 'ulama' of India to pray for God's

[1]Ja'far-i Makki Husaini, *Bahru'l-Ma'ani*, Ethè, f. 109b.

[2]ibid, f. 37a.

[3]Abu'l Qasim Mahmud al-Zamaskhshari, 1075-1144, an Iranian from Khwarazam, is famous for his commentary on the Qur'an entitled *al-Kashshaf an Haqa'iq al-Tanzil* which was completed in 1134. In spite of a Mu'tazila bias, the commentary has always been popular with the orthodox. Zamakhshari high-lighted both the grammatical perfections and the rhetorical beauty of the Qur'an. As a scholar of grammar between 1119-21 he wrote the famous work, *al-Mufassal*.

[4]*Bahru'l-Ma'ani*, f. 114b.

[5]ibid, ff. 162b-163a.

[6]Chapter II, verse 257. [7]*Bahru'l-Ma'ani*, f. 71b.

mercy for them. He accused Harun ar-Rashid (786–809) of having had Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq poisoned, although in reality it was on al-Mansur's (754–75) orders that the Imam was killed in 765. What Husaini implied was that the 'Abbasids were cruel enough to bar an Imam from carrying on his spiritual mission.[1]

Of the more important disciples of Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Mahmud who chose to remain in Delhi, one illustrious personality was Shaikh Sadru'd-Din Hakim. His father had been a merchant and a disciple of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya'. It was believed that the child was born because of the blessings of his father's *pir* and the great sufi was to become his spiritual guardian. Sadru'd-Din grew up to become a scholar, an eloquent speaker and an expert physician. He was also the author of several treatises of which Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq reproduced excerpts, and these reflect his extreme form of asceticism.

One of Sadru'd-Din's recurring themes was that people should not be obsessed with living, fearing that death was stalking them constantly. Their hopes should be shortened and they should not include the wish for a long earthly existence. A person who proved to be an obstacle to the obedience of others to God was an enemy of Islam and should be ignored.[2]

Shaikh Sadru'd-Din's *khalifa*, Shaikh Fathu'llah of Awadh, was an *'alim* from Delhi and often delivered religious sermons at the foot of the Minar-i Shamsi (Qutb Minar) near the Jami' mosque, (the Qubbatu'l-Islam or Quwatu'l-Islam). After becoming Shaikh Sadru'd-Din's disciple he explored the rigours of asceticism but continually failed to achieve spiritual enlightenment. On his *pir's* advice he rid himself of most of his books, merely retaining a treasured few, but only after these too were disposed of did Shaikh Fathu'llah finally gain deep and lasting spiritual satisfaction.

Shaikh Qasim of Awadh, Shaikh Fathu'llah's disciple, was a talented writer. One of his works, entitled *Adabu's-Salikin* (Ethics of Sufis), gave a symbolic interpretation of the relics which sufis bequeathed to their disciples. To Shaikh Qasim the prayer carpet indicated firmness in prayer, the *tasbih* or 'rosary' was the recollection of scattered thoughts; the comb was a symbol of virtue, the staff represented the idea that the One Real God should be relied on; the pair of scissors symbolized the severance of relations from everything other than God; the needle was a reminder that the exoteric and esoteric should be intertwined; slippers were a symbol of spiritual firmness; the ewer, cup and other such household utensils prompted sufis to be hospitable and in the name of deceased saints to give food to the poor.[3]

[1] *Bahru'l Ma'ani*, ff. 133b-134a. For a biographical note on Muhammad bin Ja'far, *see AA*, pp. 136-41; *Gulzar-i Abrar*, f. 147b; *Mir'atu'l-Asrar*, ff. 408a-413b; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, f. 173b-178a.

[2] *AA*, pp. 146-48; *Mir'atu'l-Asrar*; *Kalimat*, ff. 413b-424b.

[3] ibid, p. 168; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, ff. 209a-b.

Challenge to Wahdat al-Wujud

During the reign of Firuz Shah the dominance of the 'ulama' led, not only to the introduction of legislation tending towards the religiously fanatical, of which the Sultan himself was proud, but also to the persecution of sufis who publicly advocated the *Wujudi* doctrines. A second, and even more severe, challenge to *Wahdat-al Wujud* came from the Iranian sufi, Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Dawla Simnani.

Simnani, a diehard opponent of Ibn al-'Arabi's doctrines, had a large number of disciples some of whom visited India. Their ideas even influenced Gisu Daraz, one of the leading disciples of Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Chiragh-i Dihli. Simnani's philosophy emerged as a by-product of the political conditions in Iran and these warrant a brief explanation.

The Islamization of the Ilkhanid Mongols had a far-reaching impact on morale in the Muslim east. Earlier, Hulagu (1256–65) the Ilkhanid, had permitted a revival of Buddhism and the Buddhist monks, *bakhshis* or *bhikshus* (those who beg) had started missionary activity under state patronage. Generally the Irani Buddhism of this period was Mahayanist, but its form of syncretism evolved by the monks seems to have been rather bizarre, although nevertheless challenging to orthodox Islam. Its exact character remains unknown for the Buddhist Arabic works of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries have not survived. However the summary of some important works incorporated in the *Jami'u't-Tawarikh* of Rashidu'd-Din Fazlu'llah shows that the *bakhshis* believed Allah was the exalted, supreme deity, Shakyamuni or the Buddha was a prophet endowed with a life span of 84,000 years and both hell and heaven were accepted as existing. The Buddhist concepts of morality, however, dominated the framework of this syncretic form of Buddhism.[1]

It was into such an intellectual and mystical milieu that Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Dawla Simnani of the Kubrawiyya order took up the challenge of the *bakhshis*. Born in Simnan in Zu'l-Hijja 659/November 1261, 'Ala'u'd-Dawla's father was the governor of Baghdad and Iraq under the Ilkhanid Arghun (1284–91), and his uncle was a vizier. 'Ala'u'd-Dawla entered the service of the Ilkhanids at the age of fifteen. In 1284 a vision aroused in him a desire for further mystical experiences. He remained in government employ for another two years, but at the beginning of October 1286 he went on leave and later resigned.

In February-March 1287 Simnani set off for Baghdad in order to take instruction from the Kubrawiyya saint, Nuru'd-Din 'Abdu'r Rahman al-Isfara'ini al-Kasirqi (*d.* 717/1317). Officers of the Arghun's government, however, intercepted him at Hamadan and took him to Sultaniyya near Tabriz, which was then being constructed. There Simnani took part in several debates against the *bakhshis* and claimed himself to be the victor. However, he declined, the Arghun's invitation to remain at

[1]Karl Jahn, *Rashid al-Din's history of India*, The Hague, 1965, pp. XXXV-XLIX.

court and escaped to Simnan. Isfara'ini's *khirqa* was brought to him by the local sufi Sa'du'llah, under whom he had earlier been initiated into the practice of ascetic exercises. These included a special type of *zikr* in which the head moved rapidly in all directions, resulting in strong flashes of light, believed to be mystical. Meanwhile Simnani's father was dismissed as governor and his uncle executed on a pretext which has not been recorded. In September 1289, Simnani went to Baghdad where he obtained further spiritual training directly from Isfra'ini. Later he performed a pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina. In 1290 he founded a *khanqah* at Sufiyabad, near Simnan, dedicating the rest of his life to mystical exercises, teaching and the writing of books.[1]

In 694/1295 Ghazan Khan Mahmud (1295–1304) accepted Islam, having been converted by the Shi'i sufi, Sadru'd-Din Ibrahim, the son of Sa'du'd-Din al-Hamuya. He then began a campaign of ruthless persecution of Buddhists. A number of contemporary sufis of the period seized the opportunity to become militant proselytizers, the leader amongst them was Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Dawla Simnani.

'Ala'u'd-Dawla Simnani became Islam's leading opponent of Ibn al-'Arabi's *Wahdat al-Wujud*. The crux of his argument was that Ibn al-'Arabi identified Being with God. To him Being was an attribute of God, and thus, from His essence. According to Simnani the final stage of sufi ascent was *'ubudiyya* or servantship, whereas to Ibn al-'Arabi, service to God was a means through which His creative power could act. So a logical extension of the Unity of Being theory was that the servant was the Lord, and the Lord was the servant. Simnani preached that the Unity of Being was merely an initial stage in the sufi journey, and the final stage was a belief that the relationship between all creation and the Oneness or the Divine Essence was distant, the latter being far exalted above the former. This theory came to be later known as *Wahdat al-Shuhud* or *Wahdatus'h-Shuhud* (Unity of Appearance) and was distinct from the *Wahdat al-Shuhud*, the (Oneness of Witness), of the Hallaj school. Members of the Hallaj school believed that the *Wahdat al-Shuhud* 'is not only 'sight' or 'look', but an actual presence which is total witness: it is God witnessing to Himself in the heart of his votary (*'abid*).'[2]

Sufis, said Simnani, were incorrect in believing they should live in poverty, as this meant a rejection of God's bounty towards His creatures. He himself bought large tracts of land and revenue from these was used to finance his *khanqah*. In his old age he often lamented having resigned his official court position, affirming that high government status enabled sufis to crush the theological innovators and heretics. According to

[1]'Ala'u'd-Dawla Simnani, *Al-'Urwa li Ahl al-Khalwa*, Rieu, Supp. MS. no. 19, ff. 129a-170b; Iqbal bin Sabiq-i Sistani, *Iqbaliyya* or *Chihl Majlis*, British Museum, MS, or 9725, ff. 63a-65b; *NU*, pp. 438-43; Daulat Shah Samarqandi, *Tazkiratu'sh-Shu'ara*, London, 1901, pp. 251-52; Kashifi, *Rashahat 'Ainu'l-Hayat*, p. 35; *EI* (new edition), pp. 346-47.

[2]*EI*, III, p. 102.

Simnani sufis should enrol disciples in large numbers irrespective of their varying competence and abilities; *pirs* were like fowlers and could not always expect to catch a falcon.[1]

The band of sufis who had been trained in Simnani's own *khanqah* travelled throughout all of Iran. They even reached India,[2] where they visited leading khanqahs in a bid to divert Indian sufis away from a belief in the Unity of Being, which by then most had adopted.

The principal reasons behind Simnani's stubborn opposition to Ibn al-'Arabi were twofold. Firstly the Ilkhanid programme for the annihilation of the Buddhists which he himself supported, was likely to be undermined because the *Wujudi* ideas could be accommodated with the particular brand of Buddhism in Iran. Secondly, the broad compatibility of Ibn al-'Arabi's philosophy with Shi'i beliefs was a great challenge to Sunnism as were the Shi'i tendencies of Ghazan Khan and the conversion of Ghazan's successor, Uljaytu (1304–16), to Shi'ism. 'Ala'u'd-Dawla was shocked to see Shi'i tendencies undermining Sunnism in Iran. Even he, however, could not resist making some concessions to Shi'ism. For example he argued that Sunnis should exhibit great respect to the family of the Prophet and the Shi'is should not be hostile to the Prophet's beloved wife, 'A'isha, the daughter of the first Caliph. Moreover, the sufi doctrine of the mystic *abdal* could be, and was, made compatible with the disappearance of the twelfth Imam of the Isna 'Ashari Shi'is.[3] That, however, was where 'Ala'u'd-Dawla drew the line. On 22 Rajab 736/6 March 1336, Simnani died and was buried in his *khanqah*, Sufiyabad-i Simnan.

Regardless of Simnani's opposition, Ibn al-'Arabi's ideas by this time were so deeply rooted in Iranian sufism that his own success, and that of his followers, was marginal. However Simnani's missionaries visited other parts of the Islamic world seeking the cooperation of both governments and the 'ulama' to crush the belief in *Wujudi* doctrines. The 'ulama,' who already considered such ideas heretical, readily joined hands with the Irani missionaries. In Bukhara, the works of Ibn al-'Arabi were burned.[4] However, some of Simnani's leading disciples adopted a more conciliatory attitude and in fact accepted the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, and wrote commentaries on the *Fusus al-Hikam*. What really distinguished his disciples from other sufis was their missionary zeal. In India Simnani's missionaries exhorted sufis to convert the Brahmans and become active proselytisers of Islam.

Gisu Daraz

The most enthusiastic convert to 'Ala'u'd-Dawla Simnani's ideology

[1] *Chihl Majlis*, ff. 62a-62b.

[2] *Lata'if-i Ashrafi*, John Reyland Library, Manchester, MS. f. 216a; *Maktubat-i Ashrafi*, British Museum, or 267, f. 44a.

[3] S.H. Nasr, *Sufi Essays*, London, 1972, pp. 99-102.

[4] *Lata'if-i Ashrafi*, f. 216b.

in India was Saiyid Muhammad bin Yusuf al-Husaini, popularly known as Khwaja Banda Nawaz (His Servants' Helper) or Gisu Daraz (Of the Long Locks). He was born on 4 Rajab 721/30 July 1321 in Delhi. Later he was taken by his father to Daulatabad after the latter had been forced to migrate there by Muhammad bin Tughluq, along with other members of Delhi's Muslim élite. Saiyid Muhammad obtained his early education in the serene atmosphere of Daulatabad, which had been induced by many mystics who had gathered there. During this period he assisted an associate of Shaikh Burhanu'd-Din Gharib to collate the *Risala* of Qushairi.[1] Immediately he reached Delhi, the Saiyid became the disciple of Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din, performing the usual series of exercises performed by young novices to mysticism. His devotion to Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din knew no bounds. It is believed that once he was walking beside the palanquin of his *pir* when his long hair was caught in its wooden leg. Considering disentanglement would disturb the Shaikh, the Saiyid travelled a long distance with his hair caught in the palanquin. Highly pleased with his disciple's devotion, the Shaikh prophesied:

> 'Whoever is admitted to the discipleship of Gisu Daraz
> By God! it is true that he is engrossed in (divine) love.'[2]

This story, however, appears to be a later legend as an earlier authority says that 'Gisu Daraz' was not an Indian title, and that in countries outside India, Saiyids were known as Daraz Gisu (Long Locked Ones).[3]

It may be recalled that Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Chiragh-i Dihli did not bequeath the relics of his *pirs* to any of his own disciples. Although Gisu Daraz did not receive a *khilafat-nama* from his *pir*, to all intents and purposes he was regarded as the Shaikh's *khalifa*. Later authorities assert that Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din chose Gisu Daraz as his successor, but this view was not supported by any contemporary writer. Regardless of the controversy Gisu Daraz remained the most distinguished and favoured among the Shaikh's many disciples.

According to Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq, Gisu Daraz left Delhi for the Deccan after the death of Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din.[4] Abu'l-Fazl relates that Gisu Daraz moved south at the insistence of his *pir*.[5] It would seem that the news of Timur's invasion prompted Gisu Daraz to migrate to a safer place. First he went to Gwalior and from there to Gujarat. Zafar Khan, the founder of the independent Gujarat sultanate and his successors remained devoted to Shaikh Ahmad-i Khattu and did not pay much

[1]Later he translated it into Persian. A copy dated, 12 Muharram 1079/22 June, 1668, is available in the Sir Salar Jang Museum Hyderabad Deccan (Tasawwuf, no. 78).

[2]*AA*, p. 132.

[3]*Maktubat-i Ashrafi*, f. 69b.

[4]*AA*, p. 132.

[5]*A'in*, III, p. 174.

attention to the Saiyid. After living in obscurity in Gujarat for several years, the Saiyid decided to leave for the Deccan. Firishta and Taba-Taba, who had access to sources in the Deccan unavailable to north Indian scholars, say that it was about 815/1412–13 that the Bahmani[1] Sultan, Taju'd-Din Firuz (800/1397–825/1422) was informed that Saiyid Muhammad Gisu Daraz had arrived near Ahasanabad Gulbarga. The Sultan, accompanied by his retinue of nobles and officials, gave him a warm welcome. Firishta added that the moment the Sultan discovered Gisu Daraz was ignorant of philosophy, which was one of his greatest interests, the latter was no longer in favour. However, Ahmad, the Sultan's brother, became a devotee of the Saiyid. He had a *khanqah* built for him and then attended his conversational and *sama'* gatherings. In 818/1415, the Sultan appointed his eldest son, the licentious, imbecile Hasan Khan, heir-apparent, and later urged the Saiyid to bless him. The latter refused saying that Ahmad, the Sultan's brother, was destined for the throne and that there should be no interference in the divine decree. Finding the Saiyid's impertinence intolerable, the Sultan banished him from his *khanqah* near the fort. With his family the Saiyid moved outside the town to the site where his tomb, which still stands, was later built.

When Sultan Firuz was quite elderly he decided to blind Ahmad Khan in order to disqualify him from succession. Ahmad managed to escape this fate and took refuge in Gisu Daraz's house; the Saiyid blessed him and prophesied he would succeed to the throne. Vainly Sultan Firuz tried to suppress the growing support for Ahmad in the government and finally he became reconciled to his brother's accession. Firuz stood down from the throne in favour of Ahmad and the former was later secretly murdered. On 5 Shawwal 825/22 September 1422, when Ahmad finally became Sultan, Saiyid Gisu Daraz was a very old man. He died on 16 Zulqa'da 825/1 November 1422.[2] Gisu Daraz's descendants and his former *khanqah* were given liberal grants by the new Sultan.

The glory of Gulbarga, Gisu Daraz's town, in northern Mysore, was short-lived. Soon after his accession Sultan Ahmad (825/1422–839/1436) transferred his capital to Bidar, which was more strategically placed 82 miles north-west of what was later known as Haidarabad (Hyderabad). The Sultan's personal devotion to Saiyid Muhammad Gisu Daraz's successors was fleeting. Before his move to the new capital, Sultan Ahmad sent emissaries to Saiyid Ni'matu'llah Husaini of Kirman and obtained for himself the Shaikh's robe and cap. These gifts were received with great ceremony[3] at a specially constructed platform and the occasion

[1]The founder of the dynasty was Hasan Gangu who adopted the title, Sultan 'Ala'u'd-Din Bahman Shah (1347-58). From 1347 to 1422, the Bahmani capital was at Gulbarga but shortly after his accession, Sultan Shihabu'd-Din Ahmad I, 1422-36, transferred it to Bidar.

[2]Saiyid 'Ali Taba-Taba, *Burhan-i Ma'asir*, Delhi, 1936, pp. 43-8; p. 56; Firishta, pp. 316-19; *A'in*, III, p. 174.

[3]*Burhan-i Ma'asir*, p. 54.

was reminiscent of royal ceremonies at which *farmans* from paramount powers were received.

Gulbarga sank into obscurity but the lavish endowments to Gisu Daraz's disciples continued, as did the devotion of the people of the Deccan to the memory of the Saiyid. Firishta relates the story of a devotee of Gisu Daraz who was asked to evaluate the respective merits of the Prophet Muhammad and of his *pir* and gave the following subtle reply: 'Although Muhammad was the prophet of God; God be praised, Saiyid Muhammad Gisu Daraz was something else.'

Gisu Daraz was a prolific writer. He wrote a commentary on the Qur'an in Arabic and compiled an Arabic commentary on the famous *Hadis* work, entitled the *Mashariq al-Anwar*. Although a confirmed sufi, he wrote a work on *Fiqh*, entitled *Sharh al-Fiqh al-Akbar*. He translated the *Risala* of Qushairi, the *Adab al-Muridin* and the '*Awarif al-Ma'arif* into Persian. He had studied Sanskrit, but it is doubtful if he wrote the *Mi'raj al-'Ashiqin* and certain other treatises in the Deccani dialect whose authorship is attributed to him. By that time he was too old to embark on such a new course.

In his short treatises in Persian, Gisu Daraz waged an unremitting war to undermine the influence of Ibn al-'Arabi, however he avoided antagonizing his opponents unnecessarily. Nevertheless, in a strong letter condemning the works of Ibn al-'Arabi, and the poets, Faridu'd-Din 'Attar and Jalalu'd-Din Rumi, he denounced them as deceitful and called them the enemies of Islam.[1] However, Gisu Daraz's many works criticizing the teachings of Ibn al-'Arabi appear to have had little impact on the Indian sufis.

Gisu Daraz was particularly opposed to the theories of Ibn al-'Arabi and his followers which to him implied that the Divine Being, having descended into particular human beings, was manifested in them as One Being. His idea of Creator was not a Being at all, and therefore the question of a union of the One Being with other created beings did not arise. Amazed that Ibn al-'Arabi's followers should call themselves sufis, to him they failed to recognize God's true transcendent form in which they and all other creatures dependent on His grace could not share.[2] In reality, Gisu Daraz believed Ibn al-'Arabi was immersed in the visual (*Shahada*) rather than in the unseen world.

Critical also of Ibn al-'Arabi's views on sainthood, which he believed to be supported only by ignorant sufis, Gisu Daraz agreed with 'Ala'u'd-Dawla Simnani on the subject and added that although the *wilaya*[3] implied nearness to God, gnosis and a knowledge of the secrets of unification, the prophets were God's messengers and therefore their superiority to the saints was unquestionable.[4]

[1] *Maktubat-i Gisu Daraz*, Asiatic Society of Bengal MS. Ivanov, 1232, f. 19a.
[2] Gisu Daraz, *Asmaru'l-Asrar*, Ethé, 1861, f. 16b.
[3] Saintship; *see* Chapter One, pp. 39-41, *supra*.
[4] Gisu Daraz, *Istiqamatu'sh-Shari'a*, Ethé, 1862, f. 3b.

The results of Ibn al-'Arabi's teaching of the Day of Resurrection (*Qiyama*) were retrograde both morally and spiritually, believed the Saiyid. Ibn al-'Arabi interpreted the Day of Resurrection in the sense of a spiritual re-birth which could be experienced in this world. He quoted a *Hadis* saying:

> 'On the Day of Resurrection God will be epiphanized to creatures in the form they have denied; then He will say to them: I am your Lord. But they will say: We take refuge in God against You. Then He will show Himself to them in the forms corresponding to their respective faiths, and they will worship Him.'[1]

He interpreted Paradise as none other than an awareness of the divine form which was hidden in human beings. The sufi *Hadis*, 'He who knows himself knows his Lord' indicated an awareness of the secret primordial Image in which God knows himself in and through human beings. The pleasures of Paradise epitomized the awareness of this Reality. But to Gisu Daraz there were no secrets contained in the Day of Resurrection and the reward and punishments mentioned in the Qur'an were not allegorical.[2]

By contrast with prevailing Chishti custom, Gisu Daraz learnt Sanskrit and acquired a knowledge of the Hindu epics in an attempt to refute the religious beliefs in Hinduism. Like Simnani[3] he indulged in debates with Brahmans on the condition that whoever was beaten should embrace the religion of the victor. Gisu Daraz claimed to have defeated many Brahman scholars. However, he regretted that they always failed to fulfil their promise on one pretext or another. It is interesting to note that the arguments of the Brahmans who discussed Hindu mysticism with Gisu Daraz were based on the theory of the Unity of Being. They asserted that creation was not outside the Divine Being and the mystic exercise of prime importance was the perception of the self. In reply Gisu Daraz refused to recognize the importance of Hindu ascetic exercises calling them merely physical exercises, which failed to lead to an understanding of the truth (literally, 'heart'). The latter, according to Gisu Daraz, depended only on obedience to the *Shari'a*.[4] The most important aspect of sufism to Gisu Daraz was the purification of the self and an exclusive interest in God.

Love was discussed by Gisu Daraz in a number of treatises and again his approach to the question differed from that of Ibn al-'Arabi. To the latter love was two-edged, it was both spiritual and natural,[5] but Gisu

[1]*Fusus al-Hikam*, quoted in Henry Corbin's *Creative imagination in the Sufism of Ibn Arabi*, translated by Ralph Manheim, London, 1970, p. 303.

[2]*Istiqamatu'sh-Shari'a*, f. 20b.

[3]*'Urwa*, ff. 113a-115b.

[4]Gisu Daraz, *Jawami'u'l-Kilam*, British Museum MS. or 252, ff. 9a, 87a-90a.

[5]*Creative imagination in the Sufism of Ibn Arabi*, pp. 145-57, 251-92.

Daraz believed in the traditional Chishti concept of the unity of love, lover and the Beloved.[1]

Many other Chishti traditions were also strictly followed by Gisu Daraz such as avoiding the company of the wealthy, maintaining a veil of secrecy around mystical accomplishments, and the necessity for a disciple to avoid trying to acquire supernatural power and to consider one's *pir* as the greatest spiritual figure of his age.[2]

To rulers Gisu Daraz laid down the following guidelines. If they really felt the urge to search for God, they should follow the example of Ibrahim bin Adham,[3] if they were unable to do this, they should appoint a pious and honest *'alım* of impeccable integrity to implement the laws of the *Shari'a*, who should be given spies to watch over his subordinates. The *'alim's* department should not prefer unauthentic traditions to authentic ones, and should ensure the continued payment of *zakat* by Muslim citizens. Severe penalties should accompany any infringement of holy law, including the evasion of the payment of *zakat*. In disputes with the 'ulama,' the most authentic *Ahadis* should be accepted. The truly spiritual ruler should be compassionate and just to the weak and disadvantaged amongst his subjects, and should appoint only the most honest of men to his administration. Such a king should also be unceasing in the spreading of Islam (literally God's word). The ruler should work for the glory of the Divine, which would simultaneously weaken the will of his carnal self. Gisu Daraz used an example that if a country was seized with drought the king should don tattered clothes, start digging with a spade, then sow some seeds and pray for rain. Thus a monarch demonstrated he was more helpless than the lowliest beggar and such an admission would cause rain to fall.[4]

To sufi disciples who wished to become civil servants Gisu Daraz also offered practical advice. If a master ordered a disciple to perform duties which were forbidden by religion, he should resign his post. If the tasks were so hard as to interfere with the religious obligations of a disciple he should also resign. However, if the disciple had no other means of livelihood, he could reluctantly serve his ruler, using the first opportunity to resign.[5] Accountants were singled out as being members of the lowliest of all professions, for they were constantly involved in the counting of money.[6]

The Saiyid's spiritualism did not, however, end the hostility of the *Faqih* (jurists) towards sufis. He asked them not to openly quarrel with jurists and while in their company to endorse their opinions. To him the

[1]Gisu Daraz, *Wujudu'l-'Ashiqin*, Ethè, 1858, f. 138a.
[2]ibid, ff. 102a-b, 197b, 236a.
[3]*See* Chapter One, pp. 32-33, *supra*.
[4]Gisu Daraz, *Khatima*, Ethé, 1856, ff. 195a-196b.
[5]ibid, 192b.
[6]*Jawami'u'l-Kilam*, f. 91a.

activities of sufis and *Faqihs*[1] were different. Nevertheless, the paternalistic and patronising attitude towards the state evolved by Gisu Daraz failed to provide a climate for a rapprochement.

The successor of Gisu Daraz was his grandson, Saiyid Yadu'llah. The only existing story referring to him is a romanticized account of his great love for a girl whom he finally married. In keeping with the Indian Muslim custom, Saiyid Yadu'llah first saw his bride's face reflected in a mirror at his wedding; the sight so overwhelmed him he was seized with ecstasy, and the experience so intense he died. The bride and Yadu'llah's body were placed in a palanquin and carried away. When it was opened two bodies were revealed instead of one. Both bodies were buried side by side.

Equally fanciful is the story of Shaikh Piyara, a disciple of Saiyid Yadu'llah, who received a part of his training from Saiyid Gisu Daraz. When the Shaikh visited Gisu Daraz to request spiritual training, the first question he was asked was whether he had fallen in love. Although Shaikh Piyara hedged around the truth, his *pir* encouraged honesty, as it would assist him in his role as teacher. The young Shaikh revealed that at one stage so deeply had he loved a Hindu girl that to meet her he had worn a Brahmanical thread and had begun living in the temple where she worshipped. Gisu Daraz was delighted with Piyara's bold enterprise. He told him that for a teacher he was a rare find and that he himself was the right *pir* to initiate Piyara into the secrets of divine love. Then Gisu Daraz ordered him to perform forty days continuous meditation and penance in the Delhi cell of Baba Farid. The cell was later incorporated into the tomb of Shaikh Qutbu'd-Din.[2]

Bengal

Muhammad Bakhtiyar Khalji conquered both Bihar and Bengal. His exploits, as detailed by Minhaj Siraj, were based on information which the author gathered in 642/1244–45.[3] By that time the Khalji invasion was already a legend, and Minhaj's account of the conquest of Nodia (Nadia), the capital of Ra'i Lakshman Sen or Ra'i Lakhmania in 1204–05, reads like a historical novel rather than a detached history [4] The fact remains, however, that a full-scale invasion of the Sena kingdom was beyond Bakhtiyar's resources and it was his surprise lightning raid which decided Bengal's fate. Muhammad Bakhtiyar Khalji showed great foresight in choosing Lakhnauti or Lakshamanavati, near the present site of Gour, in the Maldah district as his capital, and this enabled him to consolidate his position in the north-west of Bengal. There he founded mosques, seminaries and *khanqahs* in order to make the conquered region into a new and great cultural centre in the Muslim east. The names

[1] *AA*, p. 172.
[2] *AA*, pp. 172-73; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, f. 309a.
[3] *Tabaqat-i Nasiri*, Calcutta, 1863-64, p. 153.
[4] ibid, p. 151.

of the 'ulama' and sufis who controlled the Lakhnauti *madrasas* and *khanqahs* are not recorded, but it is known that the region attracted numerous distinguished scholars and sufis, a number of whom remained permanently in Bengal.

During the thirteenth century besides Lakhnauti there were other important centres of Muslim spiritual and intellectual life at Sunargaon in east Bengal and Pandua in north Bengal. In earlier chapters we have referred to the activities in these areas of Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din Tabrizi and Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din Abu Tawwama, but the real traditions of the Chishti *silsila* in Bengal were laid by Shaikh Akhi Siraju'd-Din 'Usman,[1] a semi-literate *khalifa* of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya.'[2]

Shaikh Akhi settled in Bengal sometime after 1325. This period synchronized with the scramble for independence by local aspirants to power and in 1338 the Delhi Sultanate lost Bengal completely. Four years later Ilyas Shah (1342–57) who had seized Lakhnauti and was to take Sunargaon in 1352–53, founded the Ilyas Shahi dynasty of Bengal. Ilyas' Bengali supporters stubbornly resisted Sultan Firuz Tughluq's attempts to regain Bengal but in 1354 a peace was concluded. Three years later Ilyas died and was succeeded by his son Sikandar Shah (1356–89), the same year Akhi Siraj also died and was succeeded by Shaikh 'Ala'u'l-Haqq. The period from 1357 onwards was one of significant developments in both the cultural and political fields in northern India. Changes in the government provided a stimulus for the growth of a composite Bengali culture.

Unlike Shaikh Akhi Siraj, his *khalifa*, Shaikh 'Ala'u'l-Haqq, was an eminent scholar. In fact when Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' asked Akhi Siraj to return to his native land, the latter expressed misgivings because of the presence of Shaikh 'Ala'u'l-Haqq bin As'ad Lahori.

Various relations of Shaikh 'Ala'u'l-Haqq were prominent in the government of Ilyas Shah and prior to his becoming a sufi, the Shaikh had also been part of the élite. Soon after Akhi Siraj's arrival in Pandua, 'Ala'u'l-Haqq became his disciple. By contrast with his former life, the latter's relations soon became concerned at Shaikh 'Ala'u'l's newly-acquired poverty. When his *pir* travelled, like Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din Tabrizi before him, Shaikh 'Ala'u'l-Haqq would carry a cauldron of hot food on his head even though it would burn his hair.

Liberal amounts of money were spent by Shaikh 'Ala'u'l-Haqq in his *khanqah*. This annoyed the Sultan who imagined that the Shaikh received finances from his father who controlled the royal treasury and the Shaikh was duly exiled to Sunargaon, where he remained for two years. There Shaikh 'Ala'u'l-Haqq defiantly ordered his servant to spend double the amount he had at Pandua. Although a huge amount, the Shaikh admitted it was not a hundredth of what had been given in charity

[1] *AA*, pp. 86-7.
[2] *See* Chapter Two, p. 183, *supra*,

by his *pir*, Shaikh Akhi Siraj, and it would appear that the stream of *futuh* which had been lavished at that time had gradually dried up.

Hagiologists fail to mention the name of the Sultan to whom they refer in this anecdote. The conflict may have occurred during the reign of any of three Sultans: Ilyas Shah, Sikandar Shah (1356–89) and Ghiyasu'd-Din A'zam Shah (1389–1409). The story of the Shaikh's charity in Sunargaon reminds one of similar stories in which great expense incurred by other sufis preceded clashes with Sultans, the most notable being the quarrel between Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' and Mubarak Shah Khalji. If the story concerning Shaikh 'Ala'u'l-Haqq is correct, however, it may have taken place after 1359, when Sikandar Shah began a policy of gradual replacement of dignitaries who had established friendly relations with Sultan Firuz Shah Tughluq, with loyal Bengali officers, irrespective of their religious beliefs. Apparently both Shaikh 'Ala'u'l-Haqq and his relatives were suspected of maintaining connections with the Delhi Sultanate.

Shaikh 'Ala'u'l-Haqq died on 1 Rajab 800/20 March 1398.[1] His disciples became famous in various parts of northern India. His *khalifa* in Bengal was his son, Shaikh Nuru'l-Haqq, popularly known as Shaikh Nur Qutb-i 'Alam. His father prescribed for him severe forms of asceticism in an effort to crush his ego. For eight years Shaikh Nuru'l-Haqq brought fuel to the *khanqah*, and performed such menial services as washing the inmates' clothes. His elder brother, A'zam Khan, a vizier, took great pity of Shaikh Nur Qutb-i 'Alam's miserable condition but to the latter the taunts and ridicules of the townsfolk mattered little.

A staunch believer in the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, to Shaikh Nuru'l-Haqq the highest form of asceticism was to perform tasks for God's servants. Following ideas expressed by earlier sufis, he advised his disciple, Shaikh Husamu'd-Din Manikpuri, that his munificence should be like the sun, that is, universal, his humility free-flowing like water and his patience like the earth, that is, steadfast. The letters of Nuru'l-Haqq, collected into a volume, indicate he had an infinite command of expression of the subtle meanings of the Unity of Being. The Shaikh's father recognized his brilliance and praised the letters for their success in what most sufis found to be impossible, the expression of the affliction of divine love. The following passage of Shaikh Nuru'l-Haqq, chosen from some extracts reproduced in the *Akhbaru'l-Akhyar*, describes the goals of true mystics:

> 'The tranquillity of a dervish lies in his restlessness; the worship of a dervish is detestation of all that is not God. Dedication of anything other than God is involvement with frivolity; prayers without being wholly absorbed in the Divine are futile. Outward piety is only wickedness. Involvement with deep affliction is greatness

[1] *AA*, p. 143; *Mir'atu'l-Asrar*, f. 422b; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, ff. 199b-201a.

and the closing of eyes towards anything beside God is felicity. Common people try to purify their body, but the spiritual élite cleanse their hearts.... External purification is destroyed by certain acts causing defilement but inner purification is destroyed by evil thoughts. Sufis believe a mere worldly thought makes a ritual bath of purification as prescribed by the *Tariqa* indispensable to devotees. Never owe a favour to anyone.'[1]

Shaikh Nur Qutb-i 'Alam believed in the traditional Perso-Islamic theory of kingship and taught his followers to obey the Sultan according to the Prophet's *Hadis* and the advice of leading Chishti saints. His relations with Sikandar's successor, Ghiyasu'd-Din A'zam Shah, were cordial but he was distressed by the growing factionalism at court. A powerful party of Hindus and Muslims, led by Raja Ganesa, a local Hindu chief of Dinajpur in North Bengal began to dominate the government. After the death of Ghiyasu'd-Din A'zam Shah, between 1410 and 1415, the Raja acted as king-maker and one after the other three puppets were elevated to the throne. During the reign of the last, 'Ala'u'd-Din Firuz Shah, Raja Ganesa was *defacto* ruler of Bengal.[2] This prompted Nur Qutb-i 'Alam to write to Sultan Ibrahim Shah Sharqi of Jaunpur urging him to invade Bengal and in so doing restore the glory of Islam. Saiyid Muhammad Ashraf Jahangir Simnani also wrote a similar letter.[3] In 1415 Sultan Ibrahim Shah Sharqi invaded Bengal but a peace was concluded in which Ganesa promised his son would convert to Islam before assuming the throne of Bengal.[4] Ibrahim Shah Sharqi returned to Jaunpur and Ganesa once again became the *defacto* ruler. Although, according to Nur Qutb-i 'Alam the situation was frustrating,[5] the replacement of a legitimate Muslim ruler, along the lines laid down by Ghazali, was clearly out of the question. It seems that an invasion would have been unpopular with the pro-Ganesa faction of Muslims, and Sultan Ibrahim Shah realistically saw his prospects of permanently ruling Bengal as bleak. Under such circumstances he gauged it imprudent to invade Bengal.

According to the *Akhbaru'l-Akhyar*, Nur Qutb-i 'Alam died in 813/1410–11,[6] but the *Mir'atu'l-Asrar* states that the Shaikh died on 10 Zu'lqada 818/11 January 1416.[7] He was buried near his father's grave at Pandua, and the two tombs became a significant centre of pilgrimage in Bengal, receiving large endowments from affluent devotees.

[1] *AA*, pp. 152-53.

[2] *Tabaqat-i Akbari*, III, p. 265; *Gulshan-i Ibrahimi*, pp. 296–97; Ghulam Husain Salim, *Riyazu's-Salatin*, Calcutta, 1890, pp. 108-10.

[3] *Maktubat-i Ashrafi* (letter to Sultan Ibrahim).

[4] *Mir'atu'l-Asrar*, ff. 477b-79b; *Riyazu's-Salatin*, pp. 112-13.

[5] Letter to Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf, *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, ff. 256a-66a.

[6] *AA*, p. 154.

[7] *Mir'atu'l-Asrar*, f. 479a.

Shaikh Nur Qutb-i 'Alam's son, Shaikh Anwar, was the family favourite and his father took great care with his education. Raja Ganesa is said to have banished him to Sunargaon and then had tortured him to death in order to discover where his ancestral treasury was hidden. Some of Shaikh Anwar's ideas were noble from the sufi point of view. Love, he believed, occurred when people opened their eyes spiritually, only then could they truly perceive the Beloved and think of Him alone.[1]

The eldest son of Shaikh Nur Qutb-i 'Alam, Rafqatu'd-Din, was endowed with great meekness and humility towards others. Publicly he admitted he was inferior even to a street dog, to a Muslim the most loathsome and unclean of all animals. Zahid, his son, was also a promising sufi. Probably Raja Ganesa spared Rafqatu'd-Din, but his son and uncle were banished to Sunargaon. However, Sultan Jalalu'd-Din Muhammad Shah recalled Zahid to Pandua. Zahid's successors formed a hereditary line of spiritual succession traced from Shaikh Qutb-i 'Alam;[2] none of them, however, ever reached the stature of Shaikh Akhi Siraj and his two successors.

Among the disciples of Shaikh 'Ala'u'l-Haqq and Shaikh Qutb-i 'Alam who established khanqahs throughout Bengal, the most prominent was Shaikh Husain Dhukarposh (Dust-Ridden) of Purnea.[3]

A letter by Saiyid Muhammad Ashraf Jahangir Simnani refers to Bengal as the chief sufi centre in the Islamic world. He mentions the tombs of seventy important *khalifas* of Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi in Devagaon, and refers to other Suhrawardi tombs in Mahisun (or Mahasthan), in the Bogra district and those of the Jalaliyya order in Devatalla. Narkoti was proud of the disciples of Shaikh Ahmad of Damascus; and Sunargoan featured the tomb of Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din Abu Tawwama.[4] It seems that the Suhrawardis mentioned by Saiyid Muhammad Ashraf were largely disciples of Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din Tabrizi and members of the Jalaliyya branch which he founded, although no further details have survived. Many early sufis were honoured as martyr saints and their exploits became legendary, at the expense of historical authenticity. These will be discussed at greater length in the following chapter. However, with the establishment of Sharqi rule in Jaunpur, outstanding sufis from other parts of India and even abroad, preferred to settle there, rather than in Bengal. Even important disciples of Shaikh 'Ala'u'l-Haqq settled in Jaunpur. From the time of the fifteenth century, Bengali sufism was strongly fused with indigenous mystic elements, mainly from Naths. This gave to Bengal a unique culture which crystallized, especially under the Husain Shahi Sultans, from 1494 to 1538.

[1] *AA*, p. 166; *Mir'atu'l-Asrar*, f. 477b.
[2] *AA*, pp. 165-66; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, f. 265b.
[3] *Maktubat-i Ashrafi*, f. 38b.
[4] *Maktubat-i Ashrafi*, letter to Sultan Ibrahim Shah Sharqi.

Jaunpur

In 1359 Sultan Firuz Shah Tughluq founded Jaunpur as a strategic military outpost to be used for his conquest of Bengal. After Sultan Firuz's death, one of his favourites, the eunuch Malik Sarwar, who had been given the titles, Khwaja-i Jahan (Master of the World) and Sultanu'sh Sharq (Sultan of the Eastern Region), by the weak Tughluq Sultan, Muhammad Shah III (1389–93), was commissioned to suppress rebellions in the Doab region. In 1394 he was appointed governor of the Jaunpur region by the Sultan's son and successor, Mahmud Shah. Through his own ingenuity and enterprise, Maliku'sh-Sharq carved for himself a large independent kingdom extending from Kol (Aligarh) and Etawah to Bihar and Tirhut in the east. Although he died in 1399, in the short period of five years he had conquered and consolidated a most prosperous kingdom, after having subdued many leading Hindu chiefs. The reign of his adopted son, Mubarak Shah Sharqi, was brief. The most brilliant career of all was that of his successor Ibrahim Shah Sharqi (1401–40). Sultan Bahlul Lodi (1451–89) who revived the glory of the Delhi Sultanate defeated the last Sharqi, Sultan Husain, after several hotly contested battles. In 1483–84, he finally seized Jaunpur. Husain's plotting to regain his kingdom ceased only with his death in 1505.

During the period of Sharqi rule in Jaunpur, many centres of both the Chishtiyya and Suhrawardiyya orders were established. Eminent sufis from other *silsilas* also settled in different parts of Jaunpur. The Delhi sufi and scholar whose disciples and descendants made Jaunpur an important Chishti centre was Qazi 'Abdu'l-Muqtadir, himself an outstanding disciple of the famous Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Muhmud. As a student 'Abdu'l-Muqtadir would discuss theological problems with Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din and the Shaikh encouraged him to sharpen his wit and increase his knowledge. Later, he became the Shaikh's disciple and spent his time disseminating learning. According to Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq this was in keeping with the traditions of Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Mahmud, and his disciples. Qazi 'Abdu'l-Muqtadir advocated that deliberations on disputes of the *Shari'a* were far superior to long hours spent in prayer designed to promote self admiration and hypocrisy. He was also a poet, who wrote in Arabic. 'Abdu'l-Muqtadir died on 26 Muharram 791/25 January 1389.[1]

One of the Shaikh's disciples, Qazi Shihabu'd-Din Daulatabadi, was an eminent scholar who also studied mysticism under Maulana Muhammad Khwajgi, a leading disciple of Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Mahmud'.[2] Before Timur's invasion Maulana Khwajgi, accompanied by some of his disciples migrated to Kalpi.[3] Shihabu'd-Din also left Delhi with his preceptor. Shortly after his accession, Sultan Ibrahim

[1] *AA*, pp. 150-51, *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, ff. 185b-86b.
[2] *AA*, pp. 143-44.
[3] *AA*, p. 144.

Shah Sharqi invited him to Jaunpur and welcomed him most warmly. He was appointed the Qaziu'l-Quzat (Chief Qazi) and given the title Maliku'l-'Ulama' (Prince of the 'Ulama'). The jealousy of other scholars concerned Shihabu'd-Din but Maulana Khwajgi managed to persuade him to remain in Jaunpur. He was the author of several important religious and literary works, of which the *Bahr-i Mawwaj*, a Persian commentary on the Qur'an was his most outstanding contribution. The plan of his commentary was also interesting. Firstly the letters and words in each verse were enumerated. Then the *Ahadis* in each chapter and verse were related.[1] Qazi Shihabu'd-Din commented on the grammatical style and various philosophical and mystical interpretations of the verses, at the same time attempting to supply answers to problems they aroused. Qazi Shihabu'd-Din's command of Arabic grammar led him to write a number of treatises on the subject and also on Arabic syntax. He prepared a commentary on the *Usul of Bazdawi*, which remained incomplete and wrote a standard work in Persian on Sunni jurisprudence, entitled *Usul-i Ibrahim Shahi*, dedicating it to his patron. As a proud *'alim*, Qazi Shihabu'd-Din once wrote a short treatise discussing the superiority of the 'ulama' over Saiyids (descendants of the Prophet Muhammad), but for some unknown reason destroyed it, replacing it with a book called the *Manaqibu's-Sadat* (Eulogies on the Saiyids). Shihabu'd-Din Daulatabadi died in 848/1444–45.[2]

In true Ghazalian style, Qazi Shihabu'd-Din united the diverse philosophies of the *khanqah* and the *madrasa*. He himself, however, was more famous as a theologian. It was his rejection of the notion of the *'alim's* innate superiority that gave him an honoured place amongst sufis.

The most important contemporary Chishtiyya mystic of Qazi Shihabu'd-Din was Shaikh 'Abu'l-Fath, a grandson of Qazi 'Abdu'l-Muqtadir. He was born on 14 Muharram 772/8 August 1370, and received religious training from his grandfather. He also grew to become an excellent scholar and, following the advice of his grandfather, spent his time teaching and disseminating knowledge.

After Timur's invasion Shaikh Abu'l-Fath also migrated to Jaunpur. There he frequently differed with Qazi Shihabu'd-Din over the interpretation of the controversial aspects of *Fiqh*. Some of these disputes were compiled into treatises which, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq says, indicate that Shaikh Abu'l-Fath did not accept a government office and led a life of poverty and near-starvation. He died on 13 Rabi' I 858/13 March 1454.[3]

Among the many scholars and sufis who migrated from Delhi to Jaunpur was Shaikh Ahmad 'Isa. He was accompanied by his son, Shaikh Muhammad 'Isa, then seven years old. As a young sufi he trained

[1]The commentary was dedicated to Sultan Ibrahim Shah Sharqi.
[2]*AA*, pp. 180-81.
[3]*AA*, p. 175.

firstly under Shaikh Fathu'llah, but on the latter's advice, transferred his discipleship to Qazi Shihabu'd-Din Daulatabadi. On completion of his religious education he again became Shaikh Abu'l-Fath's disciple and attempted to purify himself after having gained a high degree of theological proficiency. He was such a natural mystic that for days he would be completely unaware of his own physical surroundings.[1]

Among the disciples of Shaikh Muhammad 'Isa, Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din was the most noteworthy. Like his *pir* his attitude to material things was that of a devoted ascetic.[2] Baha'u'd-Din's son, Shaikh Adhan Jaunpuri, also became an eminent sufi. At his death he was over a hundred years old and in his later years he was so weak he was unable to stand without the help of two people. *Sama'* was his great joy in life and he was so enthusiastic that ten men were not strong enough to quell his inspired dancing. Adhan Jaunpuri died in 976/1568–69 and was buried in Jaunpur.[3]

One of Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din's disciple was Saiyid 'Ali who behaved like a *majzub* and refused to adhere to any particular mode of dress. Sometimes he donned a sufi *khirqa* and other times he wore a soldier's uniform. He had four wives and received regular *futuh*, half of which he needed to support his numerous wives, the rest he gave to the needy. He had no servants and he himself waited on other dervishes. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq's father, who knew Shaikh 'Ali personally, reported that the latter was a striking conversationalist. Refusing to become acquainted with people immersed in the world, every afternoon till dusk Shaikh 'Ali would remain alone. He greatly approved of *sama'* and believed that the musicians should recite *ghazals* or melodies of their own choice. Shaikh 'Ali died in 905/1499–1500.[4]

The early mystics of Jaunpur took considerable interest in *Fiqh* but this trend did not long survive the demise of Sharqi rule. During that period sufis who wished to remain aloof from the traditions of Qazi 'Abdu'l-Muqtadir and Qazi Shihabu'd-Din moved to other towns. One such centre was Manikpur, near Allahabad, in the modern district of Pratabgarh.

Maulana Jalalu'd-Din of Manikpur was a disciple of one of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya's disciples, Shaikh Muhammad. Although his teacher associated with the Sultan, in true *malmati* fashion in order to make himself unpopular with the people, and thus conceal his true spiritual achievements. Maulana Jalalu'd-Din led an austere life. After performing night prayers, the latter would sleep, but would rise when the other *khanqah* inmates retired. From then until morning he would incessantly pray and recite the *Ya Sin* chapter of the Qur'an forty-one times. In the morning he would give religious instruction to his disciples.

[1] *AA*, p. 180.
[2] *AA*, p. 197-98; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, f. 298b.
[3] *AA*, p. 233; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, f. 302a.
[4] *AA*, p. 232; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, f. 301b.

The Shaikh survived by transcribing the Qur'an and the completed copies were sold in Delhi. If revenue officials made depredations on the *ra'iyat* (ryot) in order to collect revenue, the Maulana would stop eating meat, fearing it might have been obtained from illegally seized animals.

On one occasion the Qazi of Manikpur, accompanied by his son, and by Shaikh Muhammad, the latter's *pir*, called on Maulana Jalalu'd-Din. The Qazi first tested the Maulana's power of inspiration, and after being duly impressed, invited the Maulana to his house for a meal. The Maulana said that for forty years he had not taken a meal in a Qazi's house. The Qazi expressed great disappointment and the Maulana, not wishing to offend him greatly, asked whether the Qazi's son worked for the state judiciary. When given a negative reply, the Maulana consented to eat at the house of the Qazi's son.

Maulana Khwaja, Maulana Jalalu'd-Din's natural son, was a saintly scholar. Often he would fast for three days and he always refused to eat anything he believed to have been earned from impious means.[1] His son, Shaikh Husamu'd-Din, was the pride of the family. After completing his formal education, he travelled to Pandua where he obtained spiritual training under Shaikh Nur Qutb-i 'Alam. At the *khanqah* of his *pir*, Shaikh Husamu'd-Din performed all kinds of service, including the arduous task of carrying from the forest wood for fuel. In 804/1401–02, he was appointed a *khalifa* by Shaikh Nur Qutb-i 'Alam and returned to Manikpur where his learning and ascetic achievements made a considerable impact on the local people. His *malfuzat* (discourses) were compiled into a book by his disciple Farid bin Salar, which was called the *Rafiqu'l-'Arifin*.

In the above work Shaikh Husamu'd-Din compared the world with the shadow and the world of the future with the sun. If one moved towards a shadow it could never be caught, but if one moved towards the sun, the shadow followed. He advised his disciples to mix with everyone and quarrel with no one. After his initiation, a disciple should not associate with his former rivals for they were likely to mislead him. A truly obedient disciple was like a white patch on a garment of the same colour. When the garment was washed, the patch also became white and this symbolized the fact that whatever divine grace was received by the *pir*, the disciple also shared. A disciple who did not obey his *pir* received no blessings, was a disciple in name only and could be likened to a black patch on a white garment.[2] The Shaikh died in 853/1449–50.

Of Shaikh Husamu'd-Din's disciples, three are well known. Shaikh Kamal alias Shaikh Kalu, was a most dedicated sufi and died at Kara, about forty-one miles west of Allahabad.[3] The second, Shah Saidu, was a government servant during his early years. Impelled by the ecstatic

[1] *AA*, p. 178; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, f. 289a.
[2] *AA*, pp. 176-78; *Gulzar-i Abrar*, ff. 63a-b; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, f. 283a.
[3] *AA*, 179; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, ff. 289-298a.

urge, he gave away his entire property and became a *khalifa* of Shaikh Husamu'd-Din. Dressed in his *khirqa* he visited the girl he had loved and told her he had decided to become a dervish, so in order to become his wife she also adopted a life of poverty. The deprivations shared by Shah Saidu, his spiritual teacher, and a co-disciple, named Raji Hamid Shah, were extreme. At one time their entire clothing amounted to one quilted gown. Dividing the garment into three portions. Shaikh Husamu'd-Din Manikpuri gave the upper and lower parts to the disciples and wrapped himself with the cotton threads. *En route* to the Jami' mosque, the trio were presented with a parcel of sweetmeats. Taking the leaves in which the food was wrapped, Shaikh Husamu'd-Din placed them on his head so it would not be bare in the mosque. Shaikh Saidu was buried in Fathpur Hanswa, a town between Kanpur and Allahabad.[1]

Raji Hamid Shah's ancestors were Saiyids from Gardiz[2] and arrived in Delhi during the reign of Sultan Shamsu'd-Din Iltutmish. They received the title 'Raji' from the Muslim community because they came from a long line of saintly and learned men. In his youth Raji Hamid Shah was a soldier, but later he became a disciple of Shaikh Husamu'd-Din Manikpuri. His self mortification helped purify his inner soul and confirmed him in his mystical concentration. Although he had not received a high education, eminent scholars were increasingly drawn to his discipleship. For some time he lived at Jaunpur but later he retired to Manikpur where he died. The date of his death is not authoritatively known.

His son Raji Saiyid Nur, also a resident of Manikpur, combined a profession in the army with mysticism. His most promising disciple was Shaikh Hasan Tahir. Raji Saiyid Nur had also made him his disciple. Shaikh Hasan's father, Tahir, migrated from Multan and he himself was born in Bihar. Before completing his education he became enamoured with the company of dervishes.

Shaikh Hasan's father appears to have been greatly opposed to the teachings contained in the *Fusus al-Hikam*; nevertheless, his son began to study it. One day Tahir began to discuss with Hasan the *Wahdat al-Wujud* and, taking the traditional theological view, forbade his son to study the work. However, Hasan became a disciple of Raji Hamid Shah and moved to Jaunpur, thus removing the puritanical influence of his father.

It has been stated that Barbak Shah, the brother of Sultan Sikandar and Bahlul's viceroy in Jaunpur, was a disciple of Shaikh Hasan. Like other ambitious princes, Barbak Shah asked his spiritual director to pray that he might gain the Delhi throne, the Shaikh, however refused, telling him that God wished to elevate someone else. When the conversation was reported to Sultan Sikandar he was highly impressed with

[1] *AA*, p. 194.
[2] A town in modern Afghanistan, east of Ghazni.

the Shaikh's frankness and invited him to his capital at Agra. Although the Shaikh wished to visit the tombs of the Delhi saints, he left for Agra where the court had been located since 1502. After a few months he went to Delhi and began living in the Vijai Mandal house, situated in one of the bastions built by Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq, where many sufis had also lived. On 24 Rabi' I 909/16 September 1503, the Shaikh died and was buried near Vijai Mandal.[1]

Shaikh Hasan wrote a treatise on sufism and the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. The *Akhbaru'l-Akhyar* gives short excerpts from it. The *Shari'a* was described by him as the 'girding up of one's loins' in a determined attempt to obey the commands of Islam. The *Tariqa* involved liberation from one's self and dissociation from anything not apertaining to God. *Haqiqa* was to be linked with the divine and this union was to be enjoyed. The *Shari'a* was freedom from want, the *Tariqa* was *Fana'* and the *Haqiqa* was *Baqa'*. When a sufi initially undertook a mystic journey he represented goodness, in the course of the middle of his journey he was engrossed in meditation on a future state and in the final stages he became part of the divine light. The analogy of a journey was merely symbolic, believed Shaikh Hasan, for there were neither roads nor stages in the journey towards Allah, *Sayr ila'-Allah*.[2]

A classmate of Shaikh Hasan Tahir was Maulana Ilahdad known as *Sharih* (Commentator). Ilahdad was a disciple of Mulla 'Abdu'l-Malik 'Adil of Jaunpur, in turn, a disciple of Qazi Shihabu'd-Din. Like Qazi Shihabu'd-Din he also wrote commentaries on some works which the former had chosen for special emphasis. Ilahdad was shocked when his friend Hasan Tahir became a sufi and criticised him for degrading the status of religious learning. Hasan, however, persuaded him to visit Shaikh Raji Hamid Shah. Without being told, the mystic knew of the difficulties Ilahdad had about the *Hidaya*[3] and managed to ease his mind. So impressed was the Maulana, he immediately became Shaikh Raji's disciple. Among the Maulana's disciples, Shaikh Ma'ruf was the most prominent.[4]

A new dimension to the growing Chishti centres in Jaunpur was added by Mir Saiyid Ashraf Jahangir Simnani. The story of his life in the biographical accounts, such as the *Miratu'l-Asrar*, are legendary. Simnani travelled round the world only once; and then performed the same journey on two occasions in a supernatural way; hagiologists including the author of the *Lata'if-i Ashrafi*, however, have failed to discriminate between the two. More reliable are the Saiyid's own letters, although they fail to provide biographical evidence.

Mir Saiyid Ashraf Jahangir Simnani was born at the end of the thir-

[1] *AA*, pp. 194-96; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, f. 296b.

[2] *AA*, p. 196.

[3] The story is a traditional one told by sufis.

[4] *AA*, p. 197; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, f. 298a.

teenth century and left Simnan at about the age of twenty-three. He had been friendly with Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Dawla Simnani but remained unimpressed by his theory of *Wahdat al-Shuhud*, devised as a counter to Ibn al-'Arabi's *Wahdat al-Wujud*. A study of the controversial letters exchanged between Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Razzaq Kamalu'd-Din bin 'Abdu'l-Ghana'im al-Kashani and Saiyid 'Ala'u'd-Dawla seems to have prompted the Saiyid to go to Kashan to study under Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Razzaq. The latter was an enthusiastic interpreter of the works of Ibn al-'Arabi. The Saiyid studied the *Futuhat al-Makkiyya* and Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Razzaq Kashani's *Istilahat al-Sufiyya* (Dictionary of Sufi Terms) under that great master of *Wahdat al-Wujud*. It would appear that the Saiyid left Kashan some time before Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Razzaq Kashani's death in 730/1329.[1]

Simnani left Kashan to travel and during this period Mir Saiyid 'Ali Hamadani became his companion.[2] They visited all the important sufi centres in Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey and may have performed a pilgrimage. Travelling through Khurasan Simnani visited Mashhad, then went to Transoxiana where he spent some time with Khwaja Baha'u'd-Din Naqshband. Then taking the route through Multan and Uch to India, Simnani lived for a period with Makhdum Jahaniyan. Delhi was his next stop. Saiyid Gisu Daraz, who had already been converted to the teachings of Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Dawla Simnani's followers was unconvined by Saiyid Ashraf's discourses on the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. Disappointed, the Saiyid moved eastwards, reaching Munyar on 2 January 1381. At the time of his arrival, the body of Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din Yahya Munyari was awaiting burial. The Saiyid led the pre-burial prayers of Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din, and this would indicate he had already achieved considerable prominence. He left Munyar for Pandua and was initiated as a Chishti by Shaikh 'Ala'u'l-Haqq. This was his last initiation as he had already become a member of every existing sufi order. From Pandua Simnani went to Sunargaon, visiting the descendants of Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din Tawwama. Bengali sufis whose beliefs were filled with the idea of the Unity of Being were highly impressed by the Saiyid's lectures on that subject.[3] Early in Ibrahim Shah Sharqi's reign, Simnani arrived in Jaunpur, however, the personality of Qazi Shihabu'd-Din Daulatabadi so dominated the Sultan's court that he immediately left for Kichaucha, in the modern Faizabad district of U.P.[4] Although the *Lataif-i Ashrafi* tends to imply that he again travelled around the entire world with Shah Madar, this of course, would imply a miraculous journey while in the state of *Tair*,[5] a common occurrence attributed to many sufis of that century.

[1] *NU*, pp. 482-91.
[2] *Maktubat Ashrafiyya*, History Department, Aligarh University, MS., f. 176a.
[3] ibid, f. 182b.
[4] ibid, ff. 92b-105b.
[5] A sufi term which indicates miraculous flying from one place to another.

At Shaikh Nur Qutb-i 'Alam's request, the Saiyid persuaded Sultan Ibrahim Sharqi to liberate Bengal from the domination of Raja Ganesa. He also wrote a letter to Sultan Hushang (1406–35) of Malwa in response to the Sultan's request to counsel him in matters of the government. His advice included the following points: in the event of an infidel invasion *jihad* was compulsory for all Muslims, but as retaliation for an internal revolt of *kafirs*, *jihad* was optional. The administration should be run in consultation with the heads of different power groups. The belief held by some sages and ministers that consultation was dangerous because it worked against state security was, Simnani believed, against the best interests of the government.

To Saiyid Muhammad Ashraf Jahangir Simnani, the duties of a ruler to promote the interests of his subjects were extensive. He should rise early and then perform morning prayers. He should hold public audiences in which complaints of peasants and common Muslims were heard. Justice and the holy law should be enforced by the Sultan. Sadrs should place before rulers applications from the many saiyids, qazis and sufis. A sadr should have integrity and kindness without distinction, and preferably should also be a mystic. A vizier should be accomplished in all the sciences and the arts, but more significantly, he should be deeply religious.

As indicated by his letters to Sultan Ibrahim Shah Sharqi on Ganesa's uzurpation of power, Saiyid Muhammad Ashraf was still alive in 1415. This would tend to negate the date of his death as given in the *Khazinatu'l Asfiya'* as 27 Muharram 808/25 July 1405, although it has been accepted uncritically by many modern scholars.[1] Basing his assumption on the *Tabaqat-i Shahjahani*, Rieu believes the Saiyid died after 840/1436–37. Although this would make the Shaikh's life rather long, this date is more acceptable than the anachronistic date specified in the *Khazinatu'l-Asfiya'*.

Simnani emphasized that the majority of sufis were followers of the Unity of Being theory and the hostility of the 'ulama' and the jurists was prompted by reasons of expediency. In accordance with the teachings of Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Razzaq Kashani, Saiyid Muhammad Ashraf stressed the necessity of gaining a true understanding of the esoteric definitions of the technical terms of sufism. Finding that Indian sufis did not have an adequate knowledge of the terminology contained in the theory of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, Simnani wrote a number of books, including the *Basharatu'l-Ikhwan*, the *Fawa'idu'l-Ashraf*, the *Basharatu'z-Zakirin* and *Tanbihu'l-Ikhwan* to cater for the needs of novice mystics. The *Miratu'l-Haqai'q* and the *Kanzu'd-Daqai'q* were written by Simnani for the benefit of specialists.[2] His books and letters succinctly and convincingly clarified common misunderstanding about the Unity of Being. At the same time Saiyid Muhammad Ashraf Simnani popularized the

[1] *EI*, I, p. 702.

[2] *Maktubat-i Ashrafi*, British Museum, or 267, f. 44a.

use of the Persian term *Hama Ust* (All is He) thus emphasizing the belief that anything other than God did not exist—the *Tawhid* meant that what existed was He. *Shuhud* (Appearance) and *Wujud* (Being) were identical in the sense that everything existed through His Essence (*Haqq*) and this state was a gift from the Essence. An independent existence necessarily implied non-existence. The Unity of Being did not imply that Being was united with the world, wrote Simnani instead it was a realization by the slave that the one Divine Essence was manifested in creation.[1]

Saiyid Muhammad Ashraf Jahangir Simnani makes an interesting commentary on the following lines contained in the *Masnawi* of Jalalu'd-Din Rumi:

> 'I died as mineral and became a plant,
> I died as plant and rose to animal,
> I died as animal and I was a Man,
> Why should I fear? When was I less by dying?
> Yet once more I shall die as Man, to soar
> With angels blest; but even from angelhood
> When I have sacrificed my angel-soul,
> I shall become what to mind e'er conceived,
> Oh, let me not exist! for non-existence,
> Proclaims in organ tones: "To Him we shall return."'[2]

Simnani saw the death of self in terms of a spiritual ascent towards the Divine and maintained that it demanded complete severance from involvement in earthly existence. The verses did not, however, advocate transmigration, which Simnani added, was a different thing altogether.[3]

In a letter to Qazi Shihabu'd-Din Daulatabadi, Simnani gave a very spirited defence of Ibn al-'Arabi's theory of the obedience and faith of Pharaoh Thothmis I of Egypt. He stated that the question of the Pharaoh's[4] faith was discussed on ten different occasions in the *Fusus al-Hikam*. Ibn al-'Arabi observed that the Pharaoh feared neither hell nor its tortures, however, he did obey the creative will of God (*al-Mashiyya*) and His eternally predetermined command. Thus he was not a free agent and his disobedience was neither purely religious nor irreligious and therefore it was unfair to call him unfaithful.[5]

Before Saiyid Muhammad Ashraf's arrival in India, a holyman named Rukn claimed to be the Mahdi. It was during the reign of Sultan Firuz Shah, who duly had Rukn beheaded.[6] Often the subject would be

[1] *Maktubat-i Ashrafi*, British Museum, Or 267 f. 54b, *Lata'if-i Ashrafi*, XVI, Bankipur, no. 1368, ff. 114a-133b.

[2] Translation from R.A. Nicholson, *Rumi, Poet and Mystic*, London, 1964, p. 103.

[3] *Maktubat-i Ashrafiyya*, Aligarh, ff. 135b-136a.

[4] *See EI* (new) II. pp. 917-18.

[5] *Maktubat*, letter to Qazi Shihabu'd-Din; *AA*, pp. 166-67.

[6] *Futuhat-i Firuz Shahi*, pp. 7-8.

discussed at the Simnani's gatherings. The many signs of the Mahdi had been recorded in the authentic *Ahadis* of the Prophet, said Simnani, and it was therefore easy to discredit false claimants. According to him someone had proclaimed himself to be the Mahdi during the time of Shaikh Sadru'd-Din of Quniya and the Shaikh had become embroiled in a great controversy because of his refusal to endorse the impostor's claim. Likewise, Simnani met another Mahdi pretender in Turkey and advised him to refrain from such adventurous and dangerous ambitions.[1]

Rudauli

At the same time as the centres in Kichaucha flourished so also did a Chishti *khanqah* in Rudauli, about 100 kilometres east of Lucknow. The founder of the earliest centre there was Shaikh Ahmad 'Abdu'l-Haqq. It appears he was born in Delhi and that his father died during his childhood. His elder brother Shaikh Taqiu'd-Din tried to give him the formal religious education but Ahmad 'Abdu'l-Haqq showed a great desire to discover the secrets of mysticism.[2] He then went to Panipat and became a disciple of Shaikh Jalal Panipati, who in turn traced his spiritual genealogy from Shaikh Shamsu'd-Din Turk also from Panipat, a *khalifa* of Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Din 'Ali Ahmad Sabir. Therefore Shaikh Ahmad 'Abdu'l-Haqq could trace his own spiritual descent through the Sabiri branch of the Chishtis.[3]

From Panipat, Shaikh Ahmad 'Abdu'l-Haqq went to Sunam but Timur's invasion in 1398–99 devastated both the Panjab and Delhi. The Shaikh left for Bengal and stayed in Pandua with a *kotwal* (police officer). This was when Ghiyasu'd-Din A'zam Shah was the Sultan of Bengal and had embarked on a scheme to expel all *qalandars* and dervishes from the town. Possibly this was part of an attempt to purge non-Bengalis from the administration. The following anecdote by Shaikh Ahmad 'Abdu'l-Haqq, although it gives an insight into the social ethics of contemporary *qalandars* and yogis, fails to throw light on the political motivation of such a scheme.

> 'One night the king visited a camp of *qalandars* disguised as a beggar. They were just about to start eating and rudely ordered him to leave. Then the king visited a camp of yogis. They were also taking food together and gave him an equal share. To his question why had they fed a mere stranger they replied that this was in accordance with their custom of sharing all food equally, even with dogs. Next morning the king ordered the Muslim mystics to leave Pandua. All

[1] *Lataif-i Ashrafi*, Manchester, f. 44b. For further details of the Mahdavi movement *see* S.A.A. Rizvi, *Muslim revivalist movements in northern India*, Agra, 1965, pp. 68-134.

[2] Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus, *Anwaru'l 'Uyun*, Urdu translation, Delhi, 1894, pp. 10-13.

[3] Muhammad Hashim, *Zubdatu'l-Maqamat*, Lucknow, 1885, p. 94; Allahdiya, *Siyaru'l-Aqtab*, Lucknow, 1881, pp. 184-215; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, ff. 193b-96b.

were arrested and escorted to boats which took them to exile. This action led to great unrest in the town. So Shaikh Ahmad 'Abdu'l-Haqq, accompanied by a dervish (*majzub*) friend went to the palace to test the king's reaction to their presence. They remained unnoticed for quite some time, then left, returning to the house of their host. The Shaikh declared that the king did not expel dervishes and *qalandars*, only ignorant mystics.'[1]

Frequently Shaikh Ahmad 'Abdu'l-Haqq visited Shaikh Nur Qutb-i 'Alam. The former left Bengal before its domination by Raja Ganesa when he was about fifty. Initially he stayed in Bihar and Awadh, finally settling in Rudauli. Twice he visited Jaunpur but Qazi Shihabu'd-Din conspired to prevent him from being granted an audience with Sultan Ibrahim Sharqi.[2]

At Rudauli, the Shaikh led the traditional ascetic existence of a mystic. This took the form of constant refusals of land grants for either his *khanqah* or for his family. Once a son-in-law accepted a *farman* from the *muqta'* of Rudauli. So incensed was the Shaikh when he discovered the gift, he tore the paper into shreds and ordered that not a single piece remain in his *khanqah*.[3] On another occasion a qazi of Sultan Ibrahim presented another *farman* of a number of villages from his ruler. Firmly, the Shaikh refused the offer, saying that as God provided food for Sultan Ibrahim, his elephants and horses, he felt he could also be trusted to feed himself and his descendants.[4]

In order to illustrate the hardships perfect sufis were required to endure, the Shaikh gave the following practical demonstration. He asked a disciple to dig a hole in the ground and fill it with water. Then he asked him to fill the hole with pebbles and remove them one by one and the disciple followed his request. Taking some mud, the Shaikh then poured it into the hole. The disciple was asked to take out the mud as he had the pebbles, but by that time it had all been dissolved. He was expected to lose himself in the Divine, the Shaikh told his pupil, like the mud in the water, and also to simultaneously efface himself in order to become a sufi.[5]

Often Shaikh Ahmad 'Abdu'l-Haqq remarked that Hallaj had been a child to disclose divine secrets and that there were some sufis who were so mature they could drink an ocean of divine secrets and reveal nothing.[6]

'Haqq was the most perfect of the many names and attributes of Allah', believed Shaikh Ahmad 'Abdu'l-Haqq. With his disciples in the *khanqah*

[1] *Anwaru'l-'Uyun*, pp. 15-16.
[2] ibid, p. 21.
[3] ibid, pp. 22-3.
[4] ibid, p. 20.
[5] ibid, pp. 38-9.
[6] ibid, p. 36.

he showed great devotion to *pas-i anfas* (breath control) and the key word before and after prayer was Haqq. Whether they were talking or buying and selling in the bazaar, the Shaikh's disciples would cry 'Haqq.' When the Shaikh visited the mosque his disciples walked in front of him crying 'Haqq'. Many people were critical of such a custom, calling it *pir* worship, but the Shaikh justified it by quoting from the *Futuhat al-Makkiyya* of Ibn al-'Arabi.[1]

Shaikh Ahmad 'Abdu'l-Haqq died on 15 Jumada II 837/27 January 1434.[2] Among his many disciples the most prominent was Shaikh Bakhtiyar. Formerly the slave of a jewel merchant, after enrolling himself as a disciple of the Shaikh he became his *pir's* constant and obedient companion. Even after his initiation as a mystic, Shaikh Bakhtiyar continued to trade, but took great care to stay within the boundaries claimed by Shaikh Ahmad as his particular domain of spiritual influence. This story tends to indicate that Shaikh Ahmad was not opposed to a sufi earning an adequate income while simultaneously living as an ascetic.[3]

Shaikh 'Arif, Shaikh Ahmad's son, was his spiritual successor. 'Arif was also a poet and a man of great tolerance to different ideas.[4] His son, Shaikh Muhammad, was *pir* to the great sixteenth century sufi, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus Gangohi. His achievements will be discussed in Chapter Six.

Shaikh Ahmad 'Abdu'l-Haqq's contemporary in Awadh (Ayodhya) was Shaikh Jamal, a Muslim Gujar.[5] According to Shaikh Ahmad his disciple was the only real Muslim he had found between Pandua and Awadh. Here is one story about the teacher and his disciple. A bitch, owned by Shaikh Ahmad, had puppies and her owner celebrated by giving a large feast for all the dignitaries and common people in Awadh, but excluded Shaikh Jamal. The following day the forgotten disciple complained he had been ignored. Shaikh Ahmad however replied that as the feast had been given only for dogs, that is the worldly, how could humans have been invited?[6]

Lucknow

Although Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya had insisted during his lifetime that sufis join one order only, from the fourteenth century sufis were often initiated into both the Chishtiyya and the Suhrawardiyya. The practice seems to have been started in India by the Suhrawardi, Makhdum Jahaniyan Saiyid Jalal Bukhari who, as we shall see, also obtained initiation in the Chishtiyya order. Some sufi migrants had

[1]ibid, pp. 49-50.
[2]*AA*, p. 189.
[3]*Anwaru'l-'Uyun*, pp. 31-2, 52; *AA*, pp. 190-91.
[4]*AA*, pp. 191-92.
[5]A caste-like group among Muslims tending cows and living like gypsies.
[6]*AA*, p. 190.

already been received into an order but were again initiated into other *silsilas* after their arrival in India. Later sufis obtained initiation from several orders and they in turn initiated disciples into numerous other orders. In such a situation, however, there remained a dominant interest and allegiance to one main order. In Lucknow the practice seems to have been introduced by Shaikh Qiwamu'd-Din, a disciple of Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Mahmud. After the death of the latter, Shaikh Qiwamu'd-Din went to Uch where he obtained initiation from Saiyid Jalalu'd-Din Makhdum Jahaniyan of the Suhrawardiyya order.[1]

Among the disciples of Shaikh Qiwamu'd-Din, Shaikh Sarang and Shaikh Mina were the best known. Shaikh Sarang became an important dignitary in the administration of Sultan Firuz Shah Tughluq and is said to have founded Sarangpur in Malwa, naming it after himself. Resigning from government service, he became the disciple of Shaikh Qiwamu'd-Din. Later he made a *hajj* and, on his return from Mecca, became the disciple of both Shaikh Yusuf Budh and of Shaikh Raju Qattal.[2]

Shaikh Mina was brought up from childhood by his *pir* as a son and later he became the disciple of Shaikh Sarang. A celibate, he is reported to have adopted extreme methods to remain awake at night while performing ascetic exercises. One of his habits was to sit on a fence so that if he dozed he would fall to the ground; another was to sit amidst a pile of thorns. In the winter months Shaikh Mina would pray at the tomb of the adopted father, keeping himself awake by wearing wet clothes. Shaikh Sarang's tomb filled him with such awe that, barefooted, he would walk forty miles in order to reach it. He died at Lucknow and is buried right in the centre of the old part of the town.[3]

One of Shaikh Mina's disciples came from Khairabad in the modern district of Sitapur, in Uttar Pradesh. Sa'du'd-Din Khairabadi was an accomplished scholar of Arabic, grammar and *Fiqh* and wrote commentaries on popular works on these subjects as well as on the *Futuhat al-Makkiyya* of Ibn al-'Arabi. After Shaikh Mina's death he completed the Shaikh Mina's *malfuzat*. Sa'du'-Din Khairabadi was fortunate to recruit a number of illustrious disciples. Among them the most significant was Allahdiya Khairabadi who lived to a ripe old age, dying in 993/1585.[4]

Kalpi and Iraj

In 1389–90 Kalpi, a small town now situated in the Jalaun district of Uttar Pradesh, became semi-independent under the nominal hegemony of Delhi. Its chief threats to independence on the east were the Sharqi kings of Jaunpur and in the west, the independent kingdom of Malwa. After Timur's invasion, Kalpi and the neighbouring fort Iraj on the

[1] *AA*, p. 155.
[2] *AA*, pp. 155-56.
[3] *AA*, p. 156.
[4] *AA*, pp. 193-94; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, f. 295b.

Betwa, about forty-two miles north-east of Jhansi, became independent and a new rendezvous for many eminent members of the 'ulama' and the sufi movement was established. In between however, Kalpi fell prey to Malwa.

As has been mentioned previously, among early migrants to Kalpi was Maulana Khwajgi, the spiritual teacher of Qazi Shihabu'd-Din. The Maulana was a pupil of Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Chiragh-i Dihli but he also used to study Arabic grammar and *Fiqh* under the *'alim*, Maulana Mu'inu'd-Din 'Umrani. As was traditional for a member of the 'ulama' class, the Maulana was an enemy of sufism and kept himself aloof from the celebrated Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din. His pupil however was devoted to both men and his teacher's enmity towards the Shaikh greatly disturbed Maulana Khwajgi. Maulana Mu'inu'd-Din suffered from severe attacks of asthma and all treatments had failed. Finally, giving in unwillingly to the entreaties of Maulana Khwajgi, he visited Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din to seek a blessing. The Shaikh forced his visitor to eat a mixture of rice and yogurt which precipitated violent vomiting, but which finally cured him. The story continues that much to his pupil's satisfaction the Maulana was so impressed he also joined the ranks of devotees of Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din.

When Maulana Khwajgi migrated to Kalpi, he asked Maulana Ahmad Thaneswari, another of Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din's disciples, to accompany him. Maulana Ahmad chose to stay in Delhi and during Timur's invasion he and his family were arrested. Maulana Ahmad was presented to the court of Timur. There a grandson of Maulana Burhanu'd-Din Marghniyani was Timur's Shaikhu'l-Islam. Maulana Ahmad alleged that Marghniyani had made several glaring errors in his book, the *Hidaya*, and that it was therefore little wonder that his grandson quarrelled so desperately on the question of his own precedence. The Shaikhu'l-Islam challenged Maulana Ahmad to prove his allegations, but Timur ended the dispute by dismissing the court. Maulana Ahmad then migrated to Kalpi where he and Maulana Khwajgi lived like brothers. Both died at Kalpi where they were buried.[1]

Another leading sufi saint of Kalpi was Shaikh Abu'l-Fath 'Ala'i Qureshi. He was a disciple of Mir Saiyid Muhammad Gisu Daraz. After making a pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina he finally settled in Kalpi. He was the author of treatises on grammar and sufism. When he died he was buried at Kalpi.[2]

At Iraj, lived Khwaja Ikhtiyaru'd-Din 'Umar. Both he and his ancestors held very high government posts. Impelled by the mystic urge, the Khwaja resigned from the government and became a disciple of Qazi Muhammad Sawi, who had been a disciple of Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din

[1]*AA*, pp. 143-45.
[2]*AA*, p. 163.

Mahmud. Ikhtiyaru'd-Din died at Iraj on 14 Muharram 809/1 July 1406.[1]

The Khwaja's disciple, Shaikh Yusuf Budh, was a poet as well as a writer of prose. He translated Ghazali's *Minhaju'l 'Abidin*[2] into Persian and was initiated into the Suhrawardiyya order by Saiyid Jalal Bukhari and Shaikh Raju Quttal. Among Shaikh Yusuf's disciples, the leading figure was Muhammad Bihamad Khani, the author of the *Tarikh-i Muhammadi*.[3] In 834/1430–31, Shaikh Yusuf died while engrossed in a performance of *sama'*.

Malwa

The founder of the independent kingdom of Malwa was Dilawar Khan Ghuri, whom the Tughluq Sultan, Nasiru'd-Din Muhammad bin Firuz Shah, had in 1390–91, appointed governor of the province. In 1401–02, Dilawar Khan Ghuri broke away from the Delhi Sultanate and established an independent sultanate in the Malwa plateau with the Vindhya mountains as its base. This kingdom was threatened by such ambitious rulers as the Ranas of Mewar and the Sultans of Jaunpur, Gujarat and the rulers of the Bahmani kingdom.

The Sultans of Malwa showered riches on the Chishti tombs at Ajmer and Nagaur and patronized the leading sufis of Nagaur, such as Khwaja Husain Nagauri even though he had refused to migrate to Mandu, the capital of the Malwa Sultans. It was after the occupation of Ajmer by the Rana of Mewar that the sons of Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Khwurd took up residence in Mandu.

Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Khwurd was the eldest son of Shaikh Husamu'd-Din Sukhta and the grandson of Shaikh Fakhru'd-Din, who in turn was the son of Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Chishti. Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Khwurd was a disciple of Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Mahmud. One of his sons who had migrated to Mandu was called Shaikh Qutbu'd-Din.

In 1455 Sultan Mahmud Khalji (1436–69), the energetic and forceful king of Malwa, re-conquered Ajmer. In order to consolidate his rule, he decided to assign Ajmer's administration to Shaikh Qutbu'd-Din to whom earlier he had given the title of Chisht Khan, making him a commander of twelve thousand soldiers. Chisht Khan, who was brought up at Mandu, accepted the title but not the position at Ajmer. Meanwhile Chisht Khan's cousin, Shaikh Bayazid, who had retired to Baghdad returned to Mandu. The Shaikhu'l-Islam of Mandu, Shaikh Mahmud Dihlawi, arranged for his daughter to marry Shaikh Bayazid. Sultan Mahmud became Shaikh Bayazid's devotee and this prompted Chisht Khan to become exceedingly jealous of his cousin. Ultimately he succeeded

[1] *AA*, pp. 154-55.

[2] *AA*, p. 155; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, f. 214a.

[3] Muhammad Bihamad Khani, *Tarikh-i Muhammadi*, British Museum, Rieu, I, ff. 84a; ff. 467a-481a; S.A.A. Rizvi, *Uttar Timur kalin Bharat*, II, Aligarh, 1959, pp. 43-7.

in having Bayazid sent back to Ajmer at the *madrasa* attached to the tomb of Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din. This disturbed the other teachers and they complained to the Sultan that Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din did not have any offspring and Bayazid was therefore not a fit person to work at the Ajmer seminary. Shaikh Husain Nagauri who had also married his daughter to Shaikh Bayazid confirmed that the latter was a descendant of Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din and the Sultan accepted this statement.[1] However, as has been mentioned earlier, the board of enquiry which Akbar, the great Mughal Emperor, had appointed did not accept the argument that the Khwaja had issue, and the Emperor assumed control over his *khanqah*.[2]

Among the many Chishti saints at Malwa, a personality who was noteworthy for his solitude and disregard for the power of the local 'ulama,' was Shah Miyanji. A disciple of a *khalifa* of Saiyid Muhammad Gisu Daraz had been Miyanji's *pir*. The latter lived for 150 years and Shah Miyanji survived for 120. For periods of six months the Shah would remain without any human contact, at the same time starving himself by only drinking water or syrup. Although the Qazi of Mandu tried to force him to conform to such laws of *Shari'a* as congregational prayers, the Shah consistently refused to associate with others, even for prayers.[3]

Another interesting case is connected with Shaikh Ahmad Majid Shaibani. The son of Qazi Majdu'd-Din, whose ancestors were related to scholars who worked with the celebrated Imam Abu Hanifa, Shaikh Ahmad was born at Narnol. By the age of eighteen he was an accomplished scholar. In his childhood he went to Mandu with relations to seek financial assistance for his family. This was during the reign of Sultan Mahmud Khalji and Shaikh Mahmud Dihlawi was the Shaikhu'l-Islam. Although Shaikh Ahmad was still a child, he annoyed the great Shaikh by pointing out a blunder he had made during congregational prayers and was also disparaging about what he believed to be the humiliating custom of prostration before rulers, which the Sultans of Mandu had introduced. Shaikh Ahmad left Mandu at an unknown date to become the disciple of Khwaja Husain Nagauri.

Most of the Shaikh Ahmad's life was spent at Ajmer but in 922/1516 he left the town because of its occupation by Rana Sanga of Mewar. He migrated to Nagaur where he finally died on 25 Safar 927/4 February 1521.[4]

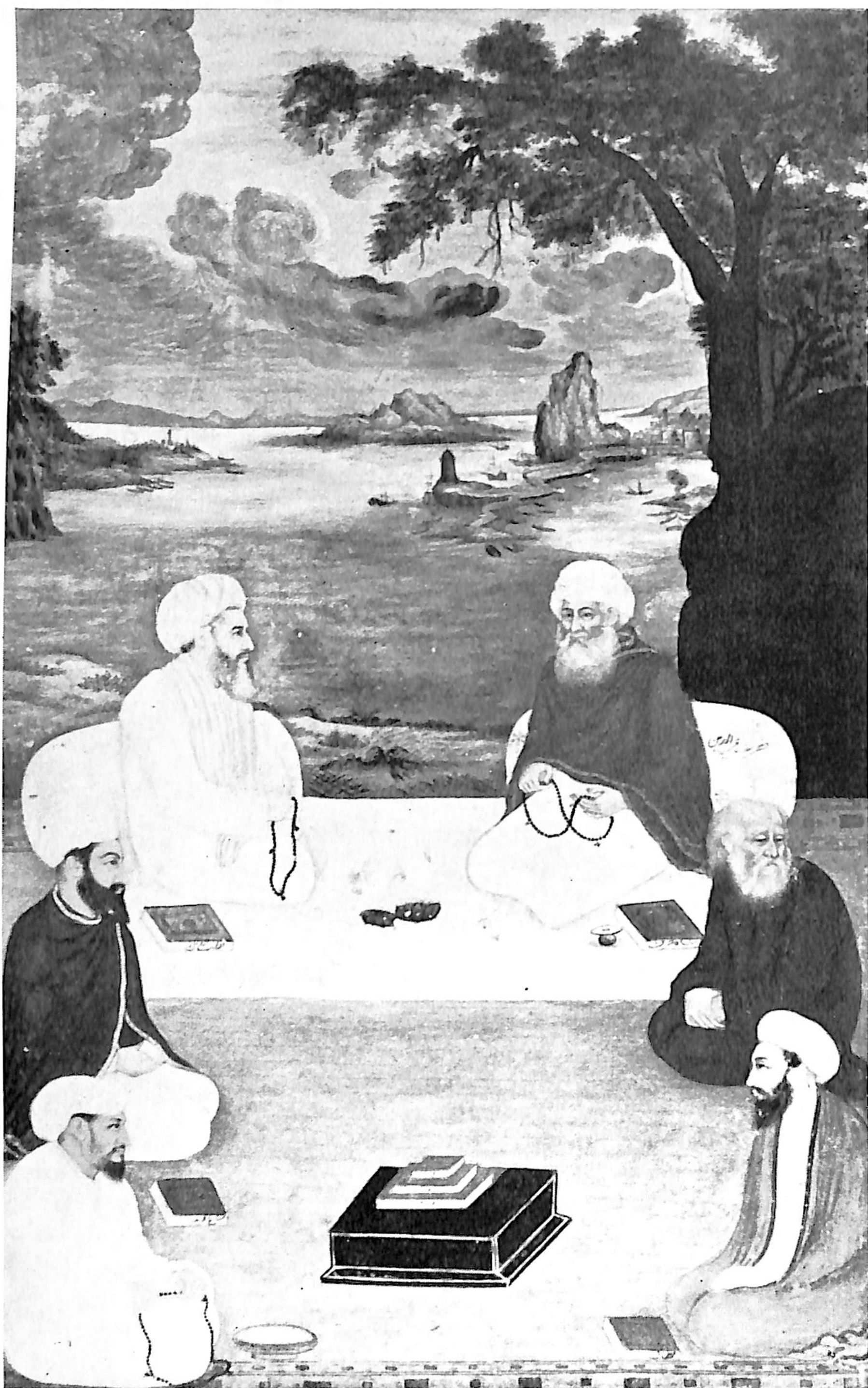
It would seem that the atmosphere of the Mandu court did not foster the independence of the Chishti order from the state. The religious tone of the court alternated between the authoritarianism of the 'ulama' and

[1] *AA*, pp. 114-15.

[2] *AA*, pp. 114-15; see Chapter Two, *supra*, pp. 125-26.

[3] *AA*, pp. 181-82.

[4] *AA*, pp. 184-86.



An Imaginary Gathering of Eminent Sufis.
XVII century miniature in the Hermitage Museum, Leningrad.
Left: Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Chishti;
Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki; Baba Farid. *Right:* Shaikh
'Abdu'l Qadir Jilani; Shaikh Abu 'Ali Qalandar; Shaikh Nizamu' d-Din Auliya'.

excessive credulity, as featured during the reign of Sultan Mahmud Khalji's successor, Ghiyasu'd-Din (1469–1501).[1]

Uch

We turn now to the Suhrawardiyya *silsila* to give an account of its development, which occurred mainly in northern India. The order spread from Uch to Gujarat, the Panjab and Kashmir even extending its influence to the Delhi of Sultan Firuz Shah Tughluq. As discussed in the previous chapter, after the death of Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din the order declined in Multan only to be rejuvenated in Uch. The sufi who infused it with new life there, was Saiyid Jalalu'd-Din Bukhari, who was popularly known as the Makhdum-i Jahaniyan (Lord of the Mortals). He was a grandson of Saiyid Jalalu'd-Din Surkh (Red), a disciple of Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya. Saiyid Jalalu'd-Din Surkh had three sons: Saiyid Ahmad Kabir, Saiyid Baha'u'd-Din and Saiyid Muhammad. Saiyid Jalalu'd-Din Bukhari and his younger brother, Raju Qattal, were the sons of Saiyid Ahmad Kabir. Saiyid Jalalu'd-Din, the Makhdum-i Jahaniyan, was born on 15 Sha'ban 707/9 February 1308. As was traditional, he received a formal religious education, and then became his father's disciple. Later he obtained initiation into the Suhrawardiyya order from Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din.

It would seem that Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq appointed him the Shaikhu'l-Islam and made him the head of a *khanqah* in Siwistan (Sehwan) known as the Khanqah-i Muhammadi to which several villages were attached. However, Saiyid Jalalu'd-Din did not remain there long. Soon he embarked on a pilgrimage, travelling to many parts of the Islamic world, visiting eminent saints and being initiated into their orders. According to Jamali, during his travels the Saiyid was met by more than three hundred important sufis. In Mecca, Shaikh 'Abdu'llah al-Yafe'i al-Yamani, the most respected saint in Islam's holiest city, aroused Saiyid Jalalu'd-Din's interest in Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Chiragh-i Dihli whose fame had apparently been spread by Indian pilgrims. After his return to Uch, Saiyid Jalalu'd-Din Bukhari went to Delhi and was initiated personally into the Chishtiyya order by Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din.[2]

It seems likely that for most of the reign of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq, the Saiyid lived abroad and his *khanqah* was administered by

[1]Among stories about the reign of Ghiyasu'd-Din, the following is one of the more light-hearted. The Sultan bought four hoofs believed to have belonged to the ass of Christ. For each he paid fifty thousand *tankas*. Later someone else brought him another one claiming that it also was a genuine hoof from the ass of Christ. The Sultan bought that too. An annoyed favourite asked how could the ass have had five hoofs. The Sultan replied that he believed the fifth to be genuine while one of the four was not. *Tabaqat-i Akbari*, III, Calcutta, 1935, p. 353.

[2]According to Firishta, the Saiyid was initiated by Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din into the Chishtiyya order in 772/1370-71, but as the Shaikh died in 1356, this must be incorrect. *Gulshan-i Ibrahimi*, p. 416.

his brother. So well-travelled did he become that Saiyid Jalalu'd-Din was called the *Jahangasht* (World Traveller). Although it is believed that the Saiyid went abroad on three different occasions,[1] the validity of such an assertion is doubtful. His travels mentioned in the *Safar Nama-i Makhdum Jahaniyan* (Book of the Travels of Makhdum Jahaniyan)[2] are mostly legendary and all of a later date. The stories connected with the Saiyid which were collated by Yusufi or Najmu'd-Din Yusuf ibn Ruknu'd-Din Muhammad Ni'amu'llah Gardizi in the *Mahbubiya* should not be accepted literally. The *Mahbubiya* states that the Saiyid gave huge gifts to qalandars,[3] that through him thieves converted to Islam[4] and that he even performed the rare and hazardous journey to China and Mongolia, at the same time converting the local inhabitants *en route*.[5] The *Mahbubiyya* also gives interesting stock-in-trade anecdotes of Saiyid Jalalu'd-Din Bukhari's encounter with yogis, all whom he ultimately converted to Islam.[6] There is also mention that the Saiyid travelled through Ceylon where, according to the author, Islam had failed to penetrate. There again he was reported to have converted a yogi.[7]

The *Mahbubiyya*, however, gives a legitimate insight into the teachings of the Saiyid. For example, the Saiyid asserted it was fraudulent to adopt asceticism after bequeathing property to a son for such a way of life involved the total distribution of all possession to the poor.[8]

During the time that Sultan Firuz Shah Tughluq ruled in Delhi the Saiyid remained mainly at Uch, only visiting the capital periodically. One of his known visits took place between 8 Rabi' II 781/24 July 1379 and Muharram 782/April 1380 and during this period one of the disciples, Abu 'Abdu'llah 'Ala'ud-Din 'Ali bin Sa'd Bin Ashraf, collected many of the Master's sayings, at the same time noting the background against which they were made. They were arranged in book form and the final product was called the *Khulasatu'l-Alfaz Jami'u'l-'Ulum*.[9] In an attempt to give the orthodox Sunni interpretation of sufism, the work covered a wide range of topics. In it the Saiyid is reported to have stressed that beginners on the mystic path should not concern themselves with trying to understand the philosophy of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* as it was for experts only.

[1]Yusufi: *Mahbubiya*, India Office D.P. MS., 1107a, f. 8b.

[2]India Office MS., D.P. 1107. It was translated into Urdu by Muhammad 'Abbas and four editions of the work were later published. There is also a slightly different edition which was published in Lahore in 1909.

[3]*Mahbubiya*, f. 9b-11b.

[4]ibid, f. 38b.

[5]ibid, f. 42b.

[6]ibid, f. 65b.

[7]ibid, f. 81a.

[8]ibid, f. 55b-6b.

[9]W. Ivanov, *Concise descriptive catalogue of Persian manuscripts in the Asiatic Society, Bengal*, Calcutta, 1924, no. 1209.

Also during the same visit to Delhi, the Sultan gave Saiyid Jalalu'd-Din Bukhari a royal reception and continued to visit him in his *khanqah* throughout his stay. So great was the Saiyid's hold with the Sultan that all his recommendations were granted.[1] His assistance was also sought by the governors of Sind.

A letter from 'Ainu'l Mulk Mahru to Saiyid Jalalu'd-Din complained that the Saiyids were avoiding paying land revenue tax (*kharaj*) and asked him to impress on them their obligations to the state.[2]

In 763/1362 accompanied by a large army Sultan Firuz marched on Thatta. Before laying siege to the city he camped on the eastern side of the river. The Sammah ruler, Jam Jauna bin Babinya (756/1355–770/1369), sought to arrange peace-terms through Saiyid Jalalu'd-Din. It was finally agreed that Jam's son, Mani, should rule as a tributary of Sultan Firuz of Delhi. The peace was generally hailed as a triumph for Makhdum Jahaniyan.[3]

We have already mentioned the Saiyid's intercession on behalf of Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din Yahya Munyari. The abolition of about twenty-eight taxes by Sultan Firuz Shah largely imposed on towns throughout the empire may be ascribed to the influence of the Saiyid. The lifting of these taxes was designed to make the sources of income of the Sultan legally acceptable to the 'ulama'. The Saiyid was asked by other sufis and members of the 'ulama' whether or not it was permissible to accept stipends offered by the Sultans; his answer was that according to the books of *Fatwas*, it was *makruh* (disapproved) however it was not invalidated by the *Shari'a*.[4] As the taxes remitted by the Sultan were not the main source of income which came from *kharaj* and *jizya*, the Sultan had little hesitation in abolishing them and making his stipends holy for the 'ulama' and sufis.

It is believed that the Sumirahs of the lower Sind who were Isma'ilis, adopted Sunnism under the influence of the Saiyid. A Jat chief of Sind, later named 'Abdu'llah, is also said to have embraced Islam through a supernatural feat performed by Makhdum Jahaniyan.[5] He and his brother, Saiyid Raju Qattal, whose real name was Saiyid Sadru'd-Din, did not have the same success with Nawahun, the *darogha*[6] of Uch.

The Hindu, Nawahun, visited Makhdum Jahaniyan on his death-bed and while praying for his recovery stated that the Saiyid was the seal of the saints, just as the Prophet Muhammad was the seal of the prophets. Disregarding the fact that in a previous discourse he had expressed that

[1]Shams-i Siraj 'Afif, *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, Calcutta, 1890, pp. 514-16.

[2]*Insha-i Mahru*, edited by S.A. Rashid, Aligarh University, undated, letter no. 22.

[3]'Ali bin Sa'd bin Ashraf, *Siraju'l-Hidaya*, India Office, D.P., 1938, f. 118b; *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, pp. 240-42.

[4]The *Futuhat-i Firuz Shahi*, gives the list of taxes; *see Siraju'l-Hidaya*.

[5]Jamali pp. 158-59, *Gulshan-i Ibrahimi*, p. 417.

[6]A revenue official entrusted to keep accounts in Persian.

a formal recitation of the *kalima* did not make the speaker a Muslim,[1] the Saiyid concluded that Nawahun's statement amounted to a protestation of faith. As he was not willing to accept Islam, Nawahun fled to Delhi, and sought refuge with the Sultan, of whom he was a favourite. A few days after the death of Makhdum Jahaniyan, his brother, Shaikh Raju, accompanied by some people who had heard Nawahun's statement to the dying Shaikh, arrived in Delhi. The Sultan, determined to save the life of his favourite, consulted three leading 'ulama' and one, Shaikh Muhammad, the son of Qazi 'Abdu'l Muqtadir Thaneswari, devised the following plan to trap Shaikh Raju, and thus save the Hindu. Shaikh Muhammad suggested that the Sultan ask Shaikh Raju if he had come to the capital in connection with the *kafir* for if the answer was in the affirmative Saiyid Raju's case would be discredited. The Sultan did as was suggested, but Raju replied he was concerned about 'that Muslim', to which Shaikh Muhammad added that the fact had not yet been proved. Fiercely Saiyid Raju retorted that the Shaikh was dishonest and would die for it. Instantly Shaikh Muhammad was seized with a violent stomach-ache from which he died. Nawahun was handed over to Saiyid Raju who again refused to embrace Islam and was executed.[2]

A notorious puritan, Makhdum Jahaniyan strongly opposed the tradition which had developed around the Shab-i Barat festival which was held in the evening of the middle of Sha'ban, the eighth month in the Muslim Calendar, when fire works were exploded, graves were white-washed and lighted lamps were placed on them. Instead of such merriment, said the Saiyid, Muslims should pray and give the money, which otherwise would be used on crackers and lamps, to the poor.[3] Only in India, he added, was there such a blatant disregard of the holy law, for such innovations were not to be found in Ghazna, Khurasan or Arabia.[4] He also sternly disapproved of giving Allah such Hindi names as Thakur (Lord), Dhani (Rich) and Kartar (Creator).[5] He advised the *aima*[6] not to accept any payment which came from illegal sources of revenue.[7] Makhdum Jahaniyan urged that dervishes, sufis and the 'ulama' visit rulers, government officials and the rich in order to elicit assistance for the deprived and justified his own visits to Sultan Firuz on these grounds. Dervishes, however, should never allow such people to visit them at their *khanqahs*; if this did occur, the time should be beneficially used by preaching on the significance of the *Shari'a*.[8]

[1]*Siraju'l-Hidaya*, f. 32a.
[2]Jamali, pp. 159-60; *Gulshani Ibrahimi*, pp. 417-18.
[3]*Siraju'l-Hidaya*, f. 67a.
[4]ibid, f. 68a.
[5]ibid, f. 64b.
[6]Those who had received *madad-i ma'ash* or stipends from land as their main source of income.
[7]*Siraju'l-Hidaya*, f. 91a.
[8]ibid, f. 36b.

The Saiyid preferred to call his disciples *Akhi* (brothers). The idea was based on a *Hadis* of the Prophet who was believed to have advocated that a bond of brotherhood be established among all sections of the Muslim community.[1] The justification was a technicality and Saiyid Jalalu'd-Din in fact borrowed the ideal both from the *Akhi* system, contained in the Anatolian craft guilds, and the *Akhi* and *Futuwwa* organizations among dervish brotherhoods in Khurasan and Transoxiana. According to Ibn Battuta, members of Anatolian *Akhi* organizations led to a communal life sharing their earnings and meals, and at the same time opposing tyranny and cruelty wherever encountered. Like the *Ayyars* of Iraq and Iran who were associated with the *Futuwwa* organizations, the *Akhis* were also warriors of the faith and claimed to have restored Islam to its pristine purity.[2] However, the *Akhi* system never really penetrated into India. It is nevertheless quite reasonable to attribute Saiyid Jalalu'd-Din Bukhari's puritanism and religious militancy to inspiration from the *Akhi* and *Futuwwa* organizations. Saiyid Jalalu'd-Din Bukhari died on 10 Zu'lhijja 785/3 February 1384 and was buried in Uch.[3] His successor was his brother, Sadru'd-Din, who achieved fame under his nicknames, Raju, and Qattal (Slayer), for his militant evangelism. Although he had as *pir* his own father, Saiyid Ahmad Kabir he also received training from Makhdum Jahaniyan. The latter is said to have often remarked that God had pre-ordained that he himself should be concerned with the welfare of people but had chosen for Raju the life of a recluse, and of one perpetually engrossed in prayer and contemplation. Such a judgement of Raju, however, belies his militant evangelism. His whole life was spent at Uch and it was also where he died.[4] The Suhrawardi *silsila* spread further through both the sons and

[1]*Gulshan-i Ibrahimi*, p. 417.

[2]*Ayayar*, *IA*, I, p. 794, *Akhi*, *IA*, I, pp. 321-23, *Futuwwa*, *IA*, II, pp. 961-69. Ibn-i Battuta says, 'An *Akhi*, in their (Turkish) idiom, is a man whom the assembled members of his trade, together with others of the young unmarried men and those who have adopted the celibate life, choose to be their leader. That is (what is called) *al-futuwwa* also. The *Akhi* builds a hospice and furnishes it with rugs, lamps, and what other equipment it required. His associates work during the day to gain their livelihood, and after the afternoon prayer they bring him their collective earnings; with this they buy fruit, food and the other things needed for consumption in the hospice. If, during that day, a traveller alights at the town, they give him lodging with them; what they have purchased serves for their hospitality to him and he remains with them until his departure. If no newcomer arrives, they assemble themselves to partake of the food, and after eating they sing and dance. On the morrow they disperse to their occupations, and after the afternoon prayer they bring their collective earnings to their leader. The members are called *fityan*, and their leader, as we have said, is the *Akhi*. Nowhere in the world have I seen men more chivalrous in conduct than they are. The people of Shiraz and of Isfahan can compare with them in their conduct but these are more affectionate to the wayfarer and show him more honour and kindness.' H.A.R. Gibb, *The Travels of Ibn Battuta*, II, Cambridge, 1962, pp. 419-20.

[3]*AA*, pp. 142-43; *Gulshan-i Ibrahimi*, pp. 417-18; Jamali, pp. 155-64; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, ff. 485b-86b.

[4]*AA*, p. 154; Jamali, p. 160; *Gulshan-i Ibrahimi*, p. 418; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, ff. 505b-06b.

grandsons of Makhdum Jahaniyan and Saiyid Raju Qattal.

Among the disciples of Saiyid Raju Qattal, the most prominent was Shaikh Kabiru'd-Din Isma'il who studied the *'Awarifu'l-Ma'arif* under him. Like his *pir* Shaikh Kabiru'd-Din spent his whole life at Uch.[1]

Saiyid Mahmud Nasiru'd-Din, the son of Makhdum Jahaniyan, had been a precocious and gifted child. He too lived in Uch and attracted disciples from Multan and neighbouring areas. He had a very large family[2] and is believed to have died in 847/1443–44. Saiyid Hamid Kabir, the son of Saiyid Mahmud Nasiru'd-Din, was known for his kindly disposition. The following story ascribed to many sufis has also been told of Saiyid Hamid. Some robbers entered his house which was always unlocked. Voluntarily he gave to them all his possessions, but forgot a bag containing ten thousand *dinars*. He made amends, however, by chasing the robbers and handing over the rest of the money.[3]

Saiyid Ruknu'd-Din Abu'l-Fath, the son of Saiyid Hamid Kabir, was an equally great sufi. It is interesting to note that all the stories dealing with three generations of these sufis in Uch recount conflicts with Hindu Yogis. Although the ultimate success in the performance of supernatural feats is ascribed to the Suhrawardis, that of the yogis is not to be underestimated. Habitually, the stories end with the Islamization of the vanquished in various types of competitions.[4] They also give some indication of the type of image Suhrawardi saints later sought to present of their spiritual ancestors.

Gujarat

Gujarat became the centre of activity for a grandson of Makhdum Jahaniyan. One of the sons of Muhammad, a son of Makhdum Jahaniyan, was Burhanu'd-Din. After he became famous in Gujarat he was known as the Qutb-i 'Alam (the Pole of the Universe). Born either in Uch or Multan in 790/1388–89 he was initiated by his father and, at his suggestion migrated to Gujarat during the reign of Sultan Ahmad (1411–42). He settled near the new capital, Ahmadabad, which had been founded by the Sultan immediately after his accession. The Sultans of Gujarat became deeply devoted to the Qutb-i 'Alam,[5] ascribing their victories and prosperity to his blessings and those of his son, Ahmad Shah himself wrote verses in his praise.

An interesting miracle is ascribed to Qutb-i 'Alam. One day while bathing in a tank his feet knocked some unknown object. Not recognizing what it was, Qutb-i 'Alam remarked he didn't know whether the object

[1]Jamali, p. 160.

[2]*Mahbubiya*, ff. 87a-89b.

[3]ibid, ff. 92a-93b.

[4]ibid, ff. 94b-95a.

[5]Sikandar bin Muhammad alias Manjhu, *Mir'at-i Sikandari*, Bombay, 1308/1890-91, p. 41.

was stone, iron or wood. Miraculously the object turned into a mixture of each of the three materials, and later became celebrated relics. The Shaikh died on 8 Zu'lhijja 857/10 December 1453 and was buried in Batwa near Ahmdabad.[1]

Like his father, Saiyid Muhammad was also known by an illustrious title, *Shah-i 'Alam* (The Emperor of the World), and was also called Shah Manjhan. Saiyid Muhammad was born on 9 Zu'lqada 817/20 January 1415 and was trained by Shaikh Ahmad-i Khattu as well as by his father. As with Qutb-i 'Alam the devotion of the Sultans of Gujarat and their nobility continued with Shah-i 'Alam.

Six days of the week were spent by the Shah in prayer and meditation and during this period he was inaccessible even to the ruler. On Fridays everyone was welcomed including the common people, and part of the day was spent in teaching and giving sermons. After Friday afternoon prayers, Shah-i 'Alam would retire to his cell for the rest of the week. Under Chishti influence he became a lover of *sama'* and *qawwals* thronged to his *khanqah*. He died on 20 Jumada II 880/21 October 1475.[2]

Of Shah-i 'Alam's disciples the most outstanding was Malik Dawaru'l-Mulk. A prominent and pious official of Sultan Mahmud I Begarh's (1459–1511) of Gujarat, he would accept only those taxes under his *iqta'* which were permissible under holy law. Cultivators loved to migrate to his *iqta'* and even the most desolate area in his care tended to prosper under his humane administration. He chose to perform the service of pouring water on the hands of Shah-i 'Alam at the time of his *wuzu* (ablution). Later he was transferred to Ambrun on the border with Kach. An active participant in the suppression of rebellions led by Hindu chiefs of Kach, he fell fighting on 13 Zu'lqa'da 915/22 February 1510. Long remembered by the people of Gujarat and the Deccan after his death, they continued to seek Dawaru'l-Mulk's blessings.[3]

One of the disciples of Qutb-i 'Alam, Shaikh 'Ali Khatib, had a well-known disciple, Shaikh Siraju'd-Din. At the height of the Shaikh's fame, Sultan Mahmud Begarh visited him during the night, accompanied by his favourite, Aminu'l-Mulk, who was also a follower of the Shaikh's. Wishing to become his disciple, Mahmud Begarh told Shaikh Siraju'd-Din he would abdicate and become a sufi. The Shaikh tried to impress upon the Sultan that a just ruler was equally entitled to enjoy a highly spiritual life but the Sultan was adamant in his desire to become a sufi. In order to dissuade the Sultan from such a drastic course the Shaikh requested he be given a position in the government, later he moved to a room in the palace adjoining the Sultan's. Shaikh Siraju'd-Din began to influence Mahmud's administrative policies through his teachings, and after sometime announced that he could teach him nothing

[1] *AA*, p. 161.
[2] *Mir'at-i Sikandari*, pp. 101-02, 127; *AA*, pp. 161-62.
[3] *Mir'at-i Sikandari*, pp. 126-27.

further and begged to be allowed to return to his *khanqah*. The Sultan appears to have concurred with the Shaikh's decision that he had reached a high religious standard and to have voiced no further plans for abdication.[1]

An important noble and a favourite of the Sultan, however, did resign his position, and gave all his property to charity. Malik Muhammad and his wife moved to Shaikh Siraju'd-Din's hermitage. The Shaikh considered him the Ibrahim bin Adham of his age. The Malik chose the lowly service of drawing the Shaikh's water from the River Sabarmati, unflinchingly walking through the bazaar with the pot on his head. His humility drew crowds which tended to annoy his *pir*. After this the Malik started to behave in a manner distasteful to other people.. He demanded large amounts of money from them and then distributed it recklessly. The crowds soon dissipated and he was free to return to his life of humility. Shah-i 'Alam was reported to have been highly impressed with Malik Muhammad's spiritual achievements and they exchanged *khirqas*.[2]

The conversion of rulers and important government officials to sufism was not an unknown occurrence, but during the early sixteenth century the conversion of a number of important officials seems to have been prompted by the approaching millennium of Islam which was completed in 1591–92. This aroused considerable uncertainty and religious and social tensions in all parts of the Islamic world. In 1496 Saiyid Muhammad of Jaunpur (1443–1505) reached Gujarat and a year later at Ahmadabad declared himself the Mahdi. A large number of 'ulama' and sufis accepted the Saiyid Mahdi. Although he was banished from Gujarat in 1500,[3] such was the atmosphere generated by Saiyid Muhammad that many people withdrew from the world to a life of asceticism.

Other Suhrawardi centres

Besides Gujarat, Makhdum Jahaniyan's disciples established Suhrawardiyya centres in other provincial kingdoms. Kalpi became such a centre due to the prestige of Shaikh Siraj Sukhta, a favourite Imam of Makhdum Jahaniyan. A more famous Suhrawardiyya sufi in the region was Shaikh Rajgiri, to whom Makhdum Jahaniyan gave the title 'Akhi.' A native of Daryabad in Awadh, Akhi was given Makhdum Jahaniyan's *khirqa* when he first settled at Kanauj. Finding his constant stream of visitors irksome, he moved to a lonely village on the Ganges called Rajgir.

During Akhi's stay in Kanauj, on the day of the Hindu festival of Holi a group of Hindu boys passed his house singing and dancing. Their music so moved him that he fell into a trance, and followed the revellers around the streets of Kanauj for three days and nights. So infectious

[1] *Mir'at-i Sikandari*, pp. 79-84.
[2] ibid, pp. 121-27.
[3] *Muslim revivalist movements in northern India*, pp. 82-7.

was the group that many of the townsfolk joined them. Naturally the orthodox religious authorities were shocked and persuaded Khwaja-i Jahan Sultanu'sh-Sharq to discipline Akhi Rajgiri. The Shaikh retaliated with a strongly worded letter to the Sultan. He didn't mind courting death, he said, for divine love had made death a cherished goal. No further action was taken.[1]

The establishment of a strong Suhrawardiyya centre in Delhi occurred mainly because of the eminence of Shaikh Sama'u'd-Din and his disciple, Jamali. Shaikh Sama'u'd-Din was a disciple of Shaikh Kabiru'd-Din Isma'il, who himself had been a disciple of Saiyid Raju Qattal. Sama'u'd-Din also obtained tuition under a disciple of the celebrated Mir Saiyid Sharif Jurjani, an eminent philosopher and a scholar at the court of Timur.

Leaving Uch and Multan after his initiation, Sama'u'd-Din visited Nagaur, Gujarat and Bayana. Apparently he reached Bayana in the reign of Sultan Bahlul Lodi (1451–89) while the latter was vigorously engaged in a war against Sultan Husain Shah Sharqi. Bahlul's Afghan governor of Bayana, Sultan Ahmad Jalwani, who secretly supported the Sharqi Sultan's bid to liquidate Bahlul, begged Shaikh Sama'u'd-Din to pray for Sultan Husain's success. Reportedly the Shaikh was angered at such a request and his reaction helped to change the mind of Jalwani and he abandoned his plotting.[2]

While the Sultan Bahlul was ruling Delhi, Shaikh Sama'u'd-Din migrated to the capital. His sanctity and fame prompted Prince Nizam, who, after the death of Bahlul, became Sultan Sikandar (1489–1517), to seek the Shaikh's blessing on the occasion of his coronation. Before he crowned himself king, the Prince visited Shaikh Sama'u'd-Din and requested lessons in Arabic grammar. Beginning with prayers to God and Muhammad, the Shaikh repeated a sentence wishing Nizam success in both worlds. After the Prince asked the Shaikh to repeat the sentence three times he knelt and kissed the ground. Although the story may appear fanciful to modern readers, medieval historians ascribed its possible authenticity to the Sultan's wisdom in attaining a blessing through indirect means.[3]

Shaikh Sama'u'd-Din became highly respected by the new Sultan. In keeping with his own influence at court, the Shaikh advised Jamali, one of his disciples, of the wisdom of maintaining a lever through which a sufi could work for the politically mute. At one of his many visits to Shaikh Sama'u'd-Din, the Sultan was told that there were three types of people who could never hope to receive divine blessings: old men who

[1] *Akhbaru'l-Asfiya'*, India Office MS., f. 32b; *Mir'atu'l-Asrar*, ff. 452a-454a; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, f. 505a.

[2] Jamali, p. 177.

[3] Shaikh Rizqu'llah Mushtaqi, *Waqi'at-i Mushtaqi*, British Museum, Rieu, II, 802b, pp. 314-15.

sinned, young men who did likewise, but hoped to repent at a later date, and kings who lied.[1]

As well as dabbling in the political scene, Shaikh Sama'u'd-Din wrote a commentary on the *Lama't* of 'Iraqi. Another of his books, the *Miftahu'l-Asrar* (Key to the Divine Secret) was, according to Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq, based on the writings of Shaikh 'Azizu'd-Din Nasafi (d. 661/1263). In the *Miftahu'l-Asrar*, the Shaikh wrote that followers of Ibn al-'Arabi's *Wahdat al-Wujud* rightly believed men to be the highest level of creation for there was no limit to their spiritual progress. Were a man to live for a thousand years totally immersed in severe forms of asceticism, said the Shaikh, every day he would learn something new, for divine knowledge and its secrets were limitless.[2]

Shaikh Sama'u'd-Din's son, Shaikh 'Abdu'llah, was also a great ascetic. Finding his wife an impediment to meditation, Shaikh Ahmad left her. At one time he recommended to the reigning Sultan[3] that some imprisoned Saiyids be released. When the Sultan failed to follow his advice, the Shaikh left town saying it was unlawful for him to reside in a place ruled by such a cruel monarch. He went to Mandu where he lived for the remainder of his life like a hermit.[4]

On 17 Jumada I 901/2 February 1496 Shaikh Sama'u'd-Din died and was buried on the embankment of the Hauz-i Shamsi in Delhi. Amongst a number of Shaikh Sama'u'd-Din's distinguished disciples, the leading figure was Shaikh Hamid bin Fazlu'llah who was known as Dervish Jamali Kanbo Dihlawi. He was a member of the Kanbo Sunni merchants who, during the reign of the Lodis, rose to considerable prominence. While he was still quite young, Hamid's father died, leaving him an orphan. Nevertheless, he managed to receive a formal religious education and excelled in poetry. Initiated into sufism by Shaikh Sama'u'd-Din while the latter was in Ranthambore, at his *pir's* suggestion Hamid bin Fazlu'llah changed his *nom de plume* from Jalali (Awe-inspiring) to Jamali (Lovable).

Jamali was passionately fond of travelling and embarked on a long journey at the time Sultan Bahlul Lodi was on the throne of Delhi. By then he was a famed poet who was known even in Herat. After visiting Mecca and Medina, Jamali travelled to the Maghrib, the Yemen, Palestine, Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Iran and Khurasan. *En route* to Delhi, Jamali visited Ceylon to see the footprint of Adam[5] and returned to the capital before the death of his *pir*. In his *Siyaru'l-'Arifin*, Jamali made a large number of autobiographical references. He was keenly interested in collecting stories about Indian sufis who had lived or travelled in various

[1]Jamali, p. 178.
[2]*AA*, p. 212; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, ff. 516b-518a.
[3]Either Sultan Sikandar or his successor Sultan Ibrahim Lodi; probably the latter.
[4]*AA*, pp. 212-13.
[5]Jamali, p. 178.

parts of the Islamic world. He arrived at Herat before Jami's death, on 9 November 1492, and held many interesting discussions with the great poet and mystic. One such discussion concerned Iraqi's *Lam'at* of which Jami was both a keen student and an admirer.[1] The anecdotes relating Jamali's witty replies to Jami's questions, given in later biographical dictionaries of Persian poets, are apocryphal and intended to provide anecdotal background to some of Jamali's verses.[2] Bada'uni's remarks that Jamali had sought corrections of his verses[3] from Jami are also not authentic.

After his return to India, at the suggestion of Shaikh Sama'u'd-Din, Jamali became friendly with Sultan Sikandar. An enthusiastic amateur poet, the Sultan soon became devoted to Jamali's company. However, his successor, Sultan Ibrahim Lodi (1517–26), in a bid to establish authority over his father's favourites, dealt with them severely. Many, including Sikandar's vizier, Miyan Bhuwa, were executed. Jamali wrote the latter's elegy. The new court favourites attempted to have Jamali punished, and although naturally alienated from the court, he remained unharmed. India's conquest by Babur (1526–30) was an occasion which was seized by Jamali to write a joyful panegyric to the new ruler and the crown prince, Humayun. During the latter's reign between 1530 and 1539, Shaikh Jamali accompanied the Sultan on his Gujarat campaign, and during the expedition he died on 10 Zu'lqa'da 942/1 May 1536.[4]

A prolific poet, Jamali's *Diwan* is extremely long. His *masnawi*, *Mihr wa Mah*, is a love story with a traditionally romantic Persian mystic theme. It concerns the childless ruler of Badakhshan, who finally has a son because of the prayers of a mountain dervish. As a youth the

[1]Jamali, pp. 139-40. Jamali says that Jami stressed that 'Iraqi wrote the *Lam'at* because of Shaikh Sadru'd-Din Qunawi's influence. Disagreeing with Jami, Jamali emphasized that only God knew the real contributions made by different personalities. In a dream Jami saw an assembly of sufis in which Sadru'd-Din 'Arif was also present. 'Iraqi was not seated but standing with the shoes of 'Arif in his hands and to the great satisfaction of Jamali, himself a Suhrawardi, this confirmed the Suhrawardi superiority.

[2]Muhammad bin Kabir bin Shaikh Isma'il who, in the reign of Emperor Jahangir, wrote the *Afsana-i Shahan* gives a very interesting anecdote which all later authors reproduced with slight variations. The author says that Jamali used to travel in the same manner as a qalandar, smeared with ashes and with skin wrapped around his waist. When he visited Jami, he sat with the skin between them on the floor. Maulana Jami asked Jamali what was difference between him and an ass. Jamali replied the difference between him and an ass was a skin. Jami asked about his home and Jamali answered that he came from Delhi. Jami asked him to recite any of the celebrated Jamali's verses, that is, if he knew them. Jamali sang:

'My body is smeared with the dust of Thy street,
That too is torn down to the knees.'

Jami said probably he was talking to Jamali himself. On receiving a reply in the affirmative, Jami showed great respect and asked him to explain a number of the verses of the Indian poets, Amir Khusraw and Amir Hasan, in which Jami did not fully understand some of the Hindi words. *Afsana-i Shahan*, British Museum, MS., Rieu, I, 243b, ff. 36b-37a.

[3]*Muntakhabu't-Tawarikh*, I, p. 347.

[4]*AA*, p. 228; *Muntakhabu't-Tawarikh*, I, p. 347.

Prince falls in love with Princess Mihr, whom he has seen in a dream. From the dervish the King discovers where she lives and after innumerable adventures the Prince meets his beloved. Their wedding nuptials are abruptly halted by news of the King's death. The young Prince dies of grief and Mihr, distraught by the separation from her lover, shares the same fate. The Prince's tomb, already sealed, breaks in half and the two are buried side by side.[1]

Jamali had two sons, the younger Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ha'i (b. 923/1517–18), was also a poet. He was a member of the court of the Afghan Sher Shah (1539–45) and accompanied him on his campaigns. Islam Shah (1545–52) also patronized 'Abdu'l-Ha'i. The latter died in 959/1551–52.[2] 'Abdu'l-Hai's elder brother, Shaikh Gada'i, remained loyal to the Mughals. After Humayun's flight from Delhi, the Shaikh migrated to Gujarat. In 1542 he helped Bairam Khan, a great champion of the Mughal cause, who later joined Humayun, his exiled ruler,[3] at Jun, a town in Sind. With his family, Shaikh Gada'i left for Mecca. Prior to Akbar's historic battle against Himu at Panipat on 5 November 1556 the Shaikh returned to Delhi and joined the Mughal army. According to the historian, Bada'uni, the Shaikh advised Akbar to kill the imprisoned Himu. At Akbar's refusal to kill an enemy who was already half dead from injuries, Shaikh Gada'i personally assisted Bairam to finally kill Himu.[4] Bairam Khan was appointed Prime Minister by the Emperor Akbar, and the former repaid Shaikh Gada'i by elevating him to the post of *Sadru's-Sudur*, the controller of land and stipends granted for religious purposes, which was accompanied by unprecedented powers. Apparently the Shaikh revoked the grants previously given to a number of the 'ulama' and to sufis who had supported the Afghans. So great was his prestige in Akbar's government that his *sama'* assemblies were attended by both the Emperor and the Prime Minister.[5]

Shaikh Gada'i's administration was generally unpopular, with both 'ulama' and sufis. Mulla Bada'uni, an uncompromising opponent of Akbar's radical religious policies, wrote scandalous comments about the Shaikh. Gada'i's role in the rebellion of Bairam, from whom the Sultan had become estranged in 1559, discredited Gada'i. After Bairam's fall from power and his exile to Mecca Shaikh Gada'i accompanied Bairam into obscurity. However, he did not leave Bairam at Bikanir as stated by Mulla Bada'uni.[6] After the assassination of Bairam Khan near Patan on 31 January 1561, Shaikh Gada'i lived in the mountainous region

[1]Oriental College Magazine, Lahore X/1, p. 156.

[2]'Abbas Khan, *Tuhfa-i Akbar Shahi* or *Tarikh-i Sher Shahi*, Dacca, 1964, pp. 177-78; *AA*, p. 228.

[3]*Tuhfa-i Akbar Shahi*, p. 161.

[4]*Muntakhabu't-Tawarikh*, II, p. 16.

[5]*Muntakhabu't-Tawarikh*, III, pp. 76-7.

[6]ibid, II, p. 38; III, p. 76.

of Jaisalmer in fear of his life. Then apparently pardoned, he returned to Delhi and was content to be supported by a minor *madad-i ma'ash*. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq reports that despite his great age, the Shaikh loved the company of pretty faced youths, probably boys. Shaikh Gada'i died in 976/1568–69 or a year later. Although he had been entitled to use the venerated name Hajji (one who had made a pilgrimage to Mecca), the Shaikh's memory was vilified by his enemies who inscribed to him such phrases:

'You are dead you great hog.'[1]

To nineteenth and twentieth century scholars from H. Blochman and A.L. Sriwastava to 'Aziz Ahmad, Shaikh Gada'i has been depicted as a Shi'i, for it seemed to them natural that Bairam Khan, who was believed to be a Shi'i, would never have elevated a Sunni to such a status. None of these writers have considered the unlikelihood of a son of Shaikh Jamali becoming a Shi'i or, if such was the case, to try to establish when and how the change occurred.[2]

Kashmir

Although the Suhrawardis were successful in Delhi and Gujarat as well as in other provincial kingdoms, their impact in Kashmir was striking. The main reason was the support they acquired from the migrant Kubrawiyyas, although their mutual rivalries in turn retarded progress. In Chapter Two, it was mentioned that Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq failed to send a leading Delhi Chishti to Kashmir, however in the fourteenth century independent sufi penetration into the valley made considerable headway.

The Muslim Shah Mir dynasty had been established in Kashmir in 1339, but Muslim contacts had commenced there in the eighth century AD. Muhammad bin Qasim was recalled to court by Caliph, Walid I (705–15) before the former could finalize plans for his proposed invasion of Kashmir in 713. A further Arab invasion in 757–58 also failed,[3] but to the Muslims Kashmir continued to have the image of a place of refuge. Between 1015 and 1021, attempts by Mahmud of Ghazna to seize Kashmir also failed. His army plundered the southern part of the valley and forcibly converted some inhabitants to Islam.[4] Turkic Muslim soldiers in Kashmir were also noted by the historian, Kalhana, during the reign of King Harsa (1089-1111).[5] Muslim expatriate soldiers-of-fortune and merchants formed a core of Muslim settlers in Kashmir. One such adventurer was Shah Mir, who arrived in 1313. The armies

[1]*Muntakhabu't-Tawarikh*, II, p. 119.

[2]See S.A.A. Rizvi, *Religious and intellectual history of the Muslims in Akbar's reign*, New Delhi, 1975, pp. 53-4.

[3]Al-Balazuri, *Futuh al-Buldan*, Leiden, 1968, pp. 445-46.

[4]Abu'l-Fazl Bayhaqi, *Tarikh-i Bayhaqi*, I, Tehran, 1342/1963-64, pp. 270, 350-51.

[5]*Rajatarangini of Kalhana*, English translation by M.A. Stein, I, Delhi, 1961, p. 357.

of an Islamized Mongol, Zulgu or Zu'lqadr Khan, who invaded Kashmir seven years later, finally left the country after having reduced it to a battered state. After his retreat, Rinchana, a Buddhist chief from Ladakh, who had earlier fled to Kashmir became king and replaced the ruling Hindu dynasty. Failing to assert his authority over the Brahmans, at the suggestion of Shah Mir, Rinchana embraced Islam.

Rinchana appointed Shah Mir, later to be described by a Brahman historian as 'a lion among men,' his chief minister.[1] The rapid Islamization of the Mongols in Central Asia and Iran was a further incentive to Rinchana to become a Muslim. The sufi who converted the King to Islam was Saiyid Sharafu'd-Din,[2] a Suhrawardi disciple of one of Shaikh Shihabud-Din's *khalifas* in Turkistan. Kashmiris remember the Shaikh as Bulbul Shah and later sufi hagiologies relate fairy-tale type legends of Rinchana's conversion.[3] Rinchana, who took Sadru'd-Din as his Muslim name, gave grants to Bulbul Shah for the establishment of a *khanqah* and a *langar*. Rinchana's death occurred in 1323, three years before that of his spiritual teacher, Bulbul Shah.[4]

Hindu rule was restored after the death of Rinchana but a Mongol invasion[5] helped to reduce its effectiveness. Shah Mir established cordial relations with Brahman chiefs, even going to the extent of marrying them to his daughters.[6] His far-sighted policies paid heavy dividends and in 1339 he became the first king of the newly-founded Shah Mir dynasty.[7]

Although Bulbul Shah's *khanqah* attracted attention amongst Kashmiris, no outstanding *khalifa* succeeded him. During the reign of Sultan Zainu'l 'Abidin (1420–70) the Suhrawardiyya order was revived in Kashmir by Saiyid Muhammad Isfahani, a disciple of Makhdum Jahaniyan. Another Suhrawardi saint to migrate to Kashmir was Saiyid Ahmad of Kirman. Saiyid Jamalu'd-Din, a sufi of the Makhdum Jahaniyan's order, made a spectacular impact on the sufi scene in Kashmir.[8] Although he was there for approximately six months, before returning to Delhi, he managed to initiate as disciple a most talented Kashmiri, Shaikh Hamza.[9]

The last quarter of the fourteenth century saw the establishment of the Kubrawiyya order in Kashmir. Its founder there, Mir Saiyid 'Ali

[1] *Rajatarangini of Jonaraja*, edited by S. Kaul, Hoshiarpur, 1967, English translation by J.C. Dutt, *Kings of Kashmir*, p. 15.

[2] *Baharistan-i Shahi*, Ethé, 509, f. 10b.

[3] The story of his conversion as outlined by Kashmiri historians is a fable and Abu'l-Fazl's account is more historical. *A'in-i Akbari*, II, p. 184. *Rajatarangini, Jonaraja*, p. 27.

[4] Dawud Mishkati, *Asraru'l-Abrar*, Oriental Research Department, Srinagar MS. f. 51a.

[5] *Baharistan-i Shahi*, f. 17a.

[6] *Rajatarangini of Jonaraja*, pp. 22, 26-27.

[7] ibid, p. 28.

[8] *Asraru'l-Abrar*, ff. 103a-b; Mulla Ahmad bin Sabur, *Khawariqu's-Salikin*, Srinagar MS., f. 13a.

[9] Dawud Khaki, *Dasturu's-Salikin*, Srinagar, 1937, pp. 65-7.

Hamadani, was born, as his name suggests, in Hamadan, on 12 Rajab 714/22 October 1314. After obtaining a formal literary and religious education, he was initiated into the Kubrawiyya order by Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din Mahmud Nizamu'd-Din Muzdaqani,[1] a disciple of Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Dawla Simnani. At Muzdaqani's suggestion, Saiyid 'Ali Hamadani obtained training in mysticism from other disciples of Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Dawla Simnani, such as Shaikh Najmu'd-Din Muhammad Adkani Isfra'ini,[2] Akhi Muhammad Dahistani and Abu'l-Barkat Taqiu'd-Din 'Ali Dusti.[3] Before 1336, the date of 'Ala'u'd-Dawla's death, Saiyid 'Ali reached the *khanqah* of the veteran sufi in Simnan and completed his final training with him. Probably about this time, Saiyid 'Ali and Saiyid Ashraf Jahangir met each other. They either left Simnan together or one travelled slightly ahead of the other, shortly before 'Ala'u'd-Dawla's death. However, after initially travelling together, they parted company and continued on alone. Saiyid Ashraf reached India much earlier than Saiyid 'Ali, who first despatched his cousins, Saiyid Husain ahead to India and also Saiyid Taju'd-Din to Kashmir.[4] The latter reached there during the reign of Sultan Shihabu'd-Din (1354–73) and was given facilities to build a *khanqah* and a *langar* at Shihabu'd-Din Pura, some nine miles north-west of Srinagar. Saiyid Taju'd-Din's encouraging reports on political and religious conditions there seem to have prompted Mir Saiyid 'Ali Hamadani to visit Kashmir. At Taju'd-Din's invitation, Saiyid Husain also migrated to Kashmir. Mir Saiyid 'Ali on his way to Kashmir passed through Uch and visited the *khanqah* of the Makhdum Jahaniyan. When Saiyid Makhdum Jahaniyan was informed of the visit of the Hamadani Saiyid, without taking much notice he stated merely that Hamadan (All Knowing) was none but the Great Knower of the Invisible World, that is, God the Most High.[5] Mir Saiyid 'Ali was so annoyed that he wrote a treatise entitled *Hamadaniyya* in which he explained that a leading sufi (Makhdum Jahaniyan) was confused about the word 'Hamadan' which also was a place in Iran.[6]

It would seem that Saiyid 'Ali reached Srinagar in 783/1381 during the reign of Sultan Qutbu'd-Din (1373–89).[7] The stories that the Saiyid visited Kashmir three times in 774/1372, 781–1399 and 785/1383, and that Timur expelled him from Hamadan in 1383, mentioned in many medieval hagiologies and modern works, are mythical. From the Saiyid's alleged statement that he had travelled three times the *rub'i-maskun* (an inhabited

[1]Muzdaqan, on the border of the Kharaqan district of Hamadan, was a very famous sufi centre. *The lands of the eastern Caliphate*, p. 212.

[2]He died at Isfara'in in Khurasan in 778/1376-77. *NU*, p. 444.

[3]*NU*, pp. 445-47.

[4]Saiyid 'Ali, *Tarikh-i Kashmir*, Srinagar, MS., f. 1a.

[5]*AA*, p. 143.

[6]*Risala Hamadamiya*, Raza Library Rampur, India, ff. 148b-149a.

[7]*Baharistan-i Shahi*, f. 23a; Saiyid 'Ali's dates are conflicting, ff. 3a, 12a. Haidar Malik, *Tarikh-i Kashmir*, Ethé, 2846, f. 91a.

quarter of the world), and associated with 1,400 prominent sufis, grew the legend of his three visits to Kashmir.[1] The authenticity of this statement is doubtful as the fact remains that it fails to indicate how the Saiyid visited every region of the world on three occasions; it merely suggests that he made three different journeys to populated areas, not necessarily each time to the same place.

On his visit to Kashmir the Saiyid was accompanied by a considerable number of sufis although they would not have numbered 700 as is popularly believed. The miracles alleged to have been performed in order to convert the Brahman priest of Kali Mandir in Srinagar are reminiscent of those attributed to Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Chishti and to a large number of other sufis. Yogis at the court of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq had been seen by Ibn Battuta to fly through the air. Such stock-in-trade legends merit no attention. However, Kali Mandir was demolished and subsequently the Saiyid's *khanqah* was built there. Saiyid 'Ali travelled extensively throughout Kashmir leaving behind him approximately twenty eminent Irani sufis who had accompanied him from Iran in different parts of the valley where they established khanqahs and *langars*. Some of the Saiyid's Kashmiri disciples also established independent sufi centres.

Unlike the Chishtis, Mir Saiyid 'Ali Hamadani was imbued with the searing missionary zeal of 'Ala'u'd-Dawla Simnani. This enthusiasm and that of his followers took the form of temple demolition and the enforced conversion of many Kashmiris. Although Sultan Qutbu'd-Din smoothed their way in Kashmir, he himself was not a bigot. He visited Hindu shrines, dressed like a Hindu and celebrated Hindu festivals; on one occasion he even performed a *yajna*[2] in order to avert a famine. This does not imply that Qutbu'd-Din was Hinduised or that there were no members of the 'ulama' in Kashmir to keep him on the orthodox path. Rather he followed the traditions of his predecessor, Shah Mir, in maintaining friendly relations with Hindu subjects and the Brahman élite who dominated the administration. Although the Sultan did not wish to alienate the migrants from Iran, their activities shocked him and a conflict between them became inevitable.

After a stay in Kashmir of about three years, Saiyid 'Ali left Srinagar a frustrated man. The stated reason for his departure was a proposed *hajj*.[3] *En route* he fell ill and died on 6 Zu'l-hijja 786/19 January 1385 after having passed through Pakhli, near Kunar. His body was taken to Khuttalan, now part of the U.S.S.R., where it was buried.

[1]A.A. Hikmat, *'Les voyages d'une personne mystique de Hamadan a` Kashmir'*, *Journal Asiatique*, CCXL, 1952, p. 62; Muhibbul Hasan, *Kashmir under the Sultans*, Calcutta, 1959, p. 56.

[2]The performance of a sacrifice.

[3]Saiyid 'Ali, *Tarikh Kashmir*, ff. 5a-b; *Baharistan-i Shahi*, f. 23b; *Rajatarangini of Jonaraja*, p. 53; Haidar Malik, *Tarikh-i Kashmir*, f. 93a; *Baharistan-i Shahi*, f. 25a.

The authorship of 170 books have been attributed to Saiyid 'Ali and undoubtedly this is an exaggeration. Generally he wrote short treatises of which about fifty survived; his most famous contribution to sufi literature was the religio-political treatise entitled the *Zakhiratu'l-Muluk*. His shorter works are elementary manuals on ethics of mysticism. Their clarity of expression and style are remarkable. The more advanced treatises of Saiyid 'Ali depart seriously from the philosophy expressed by Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Dawla Simnani in so far as they spiritedly support the *Wahdat al-Wujud* theory of Ibn al-'Arabi. The Saiyid translated the *Fusus al-Hikam*[1] into Persian and wrote a number of treatises explaining sufi technical terms using as background Ibn al-'Arabi's philosophy. In a short treatise entitled the *Wujudiyya* he emphasized that God revealed His Essence to Himself in the world and that this revelation emanated from His *Ahadiyya* (Oneness) and no other source. The essence of things (*al-a'yanu'l-sabita*) emerged in the form of reason. Significantly, 'Ali Hamadani's interpretation of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* did not exclude logic from the mystical experience. However, he believed the epitome of the manifestation of the Names and Attributes of Being was in the *Insan-i Kamil* (Perfect Man).[2]

Of the other short treatises by Saiyid 'Ali, another significant contribution is his *Risala-i Futuwwa*, in which he details the relationship between the ideas of *Akhi* (brother) and the *Futuwwa* (chivalric ideal). In a literal sense, to the Saiyid Akhi meant brotherhood in the closest of possible way, that is, being born of the same parents. By way of formality or courtesy some people called themselves brothers but no one really believed in this formal relationship. Secondly, orthodox Muslims and the 'ulama' acquainted with the *Hadis* of the Prophet Muhammad, considered that the faithful (*mu'minun*) comprised a large brotherhood. Thirdly, spiritualists who had a true perception of the meaning of *Akhi* considered it a particular stage in the sufi journey which was known as *Futuwwa*. In fact, Saiyid 'Ali added, all stages of the mystic journey depended on *Futuwwa* as did all human achievements. An intelligent man, according to the Saiyid, could study and understand thousands of books without a teacher but his *fatwa* (judicial opinion) was untrustworthy unless he had studied under a reliable teacher. Likewise if some one performed ascetic exercises for a hundred years, his meditation was useless unless it had been done under a master of the *Tariqa* and the *Futuwwa*. 'Ali bin Abi Talib, the Saiyid said, had been made custodian of the knowledge of the *Futuwwa* by the Prophet Muhammad and therefore the *Futuwwa* and the *Tariqa* were directly linked with Muhammad.

In his *Risala* Saiyid 'Ali continued to outline the definitions of the *Futuwwa* as specified by a number of great sufis. To Hasan Basri, the *Futuwwa* was the battle against one's lower self (*nafs*). Haris Muhasibi

[1]Sir Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad, MS., *Tasawwuf*, p. 780.
[2]*Risala-i Wujudiyya*, Raza Library, Rampur, India.

believed that *Futuwwa* implied one should be just to others without expecting the same in return. Fuzayl bin Iyaz asserted that *Futuwwa* demanded indiscriminate benevolence to others. Beneficence should be without distinction between Muslim and *kafir*, friend or enemy. According to Junaid, *Futuwwa* meant generosity and the avoidance of evil. To Shaikh Sahl bin Tustari it was adherence to the *Sunna* of the Prophet, the most lofty *Sunna* being contempt for the world. Abu Yazid Bastami believed that if you gave abundantly to others it should be considered meagre, whereas if you yourself received even the tiniest gift it should be considered too much. Saiyid 'Ali Hamadani also called attention to the teaching of 'Ali bin Abi Talib, who, he believed, was the greatest example of *Futuwwa*. According to him the *Futuwwa* had four pillars: forgiveness when one could inflict revenge, patience at the time of anger, wishing an enemy well and a preference for the needs of others rather than one's own.[1] The Saiyid himself believed *Futuwwa* to be a consideration of the rights of mankind. Thus spiritualists whose earthly existence had been completely effaced, who swam in the ocean of the *Ahadiyya* (Oneness) and flew into the realm of the *Huwayya* (He-ness or Divine) belonged to a supernatural category, but those who remained in the category of ordinary people and looked after the comfort of mankind were the true members of the *Futuwwa*.

The organization of *Akhis*, founded on the *Futuwwa* spirit, of self sacrifice, were accorded a high rank in the sufi movement. *Akhis* renounced the world to lead a full life of contemplation. They were expected to develop qualities believed to be possessed by angels: respect for the aged, wisdom for the youth, kindness to children, benevolence to the weak, limitless generosity to dervishes, veneration for theologians, sternness to the cruel, enmity to sinners, generosity and courtesy to the common people, humility and prayerfulness before God, opposition to the carnal self, peace with all creatures and belligerence towards the devil.[2] Besides these qualities and others, *Akhis* should show steadfastness in the observance of the *Shari'a* and the *Tariqa*.

Mir Saiyid 'Ali's description of *Akhi* and *Futuwwa* was designed to add a mystical flavour to the organizations of Anatolian and Iranian dervishes who themselves were either members of, or associated with, merchant and artisan guilds. Although available records give no evidence of a connection between the Saiyid followers of Mir 'Ali Hamadani and guilds it may not be wrong to presume that before joining Mir Saiyid 'Ali some of them were connected with all the three organizations. In Kashmir they seem to have found new avenues to promote commercial interests and exhibit a Robin Hood-type spirit, ransacking Hindu temples and enriching themselves and their local followers. The shocked Mir Saiyid 'Ali Hamadani found it necessary to remind them of the true

[1] *Risala-i Futuwwa*, Raza Library, Rampur, India, ff. 45a-47a.
[2] *Risala-i Akhi*, Raza Library, Rampur, India.

mystical aspects of the *Futuwwa* and *Akhi*, but the real philosophy had little impact. During the reign of Sultan Sikandar, they seized the opportunity to become blatant proselytizers. The *Akhi* and *Futuwwa* teachings of Saiyid 'Ali, however, made some impact on Kashmiri Muslim artisan and merchant groups, enabling them to unite sufism with broadly based social ethics.

The best known of Saiyid 'Ali Hamadani's works is the *Zakhiratu'l-Muluk*. It was written at the urging of a friend, although previous rulers had asked him to write a text for their own guidance. The work is a detailed exploration of Islamic socio-political ethics which rulers and the governing classes were expected to follow. Like many political theorists, Saiyid 'Ali considered rulers indispensable for the well-being of society. Men were marked by an innate beastly nature and monarchs helped to stem the tide, at the same time bestowing stability to the world and paving the way for the promulgation of the *Shari'a*. In Adam, there had been a union of both Prophet and Sultan. Prophets were unlikely to be seized with lust and a desire for self will, but Sultans could readily become victims of passion and lust; Saiyid 'Ali believed only the first four Rightly Guided Caliphs were ideal rulers and had been free from such human failings. Sultans were advised to walk in the footsteps of the *Khulfa-i Rashidun*, however, Saiyid 'Ali admitted that such pious Muslims as were the subjects of the second Caliph 'Umar were no longer to be found. God's real vicegerent and shadow on earth, however, was a Sultan who was both just and an enforcer of the laws of the *Shari'a*. He advised them to discover and associate with pious *'alims* and avoid the company of those members of the 'ulama' and sufis who were ignorant impostors.[1]

Saiyid 'Ali believed the alleged 'covenant of 'Umar,' in reality a convenient justification for the intolerant practices of later ages, to be a legitimate basis for the relationship between the Sultans and the *zimmis* (protected people).[2] Although Saiyid 'Ali considered Hindus to be *zimmis*, as previously mentioned, the clauses outlined in this were, to say the least, detested Hindus. The 'covenant' laid down the following:

1. They (the Hindus) will not build new idol temples.
2. They will not rebuild any existing temple which may have fallen into disrepair.
3. Muslim travellers will not be prevented from staying in temples.
4. Muslim travellers will be provided hospitality by *zimmis* in their own houses for three days.
5. *Zimmis* will neither act as spies nor give spies shelter in their houses.

[1]*Zakhiratu'l-Muluk*, Amritsar, 1321/1903-4, pp. 105-17.

[2]Arnold, T.W., *The preaching of Islam*, Lahore, 1956, p. 57; A.S. Tritton, *The caliphs and their non-Muslim subjects*, 2nd edition, London, 1970, p. 5.

6. If any relation of a *zimmi* is inclined towards Islam, he should not be prevented from doing so.
7. *Zimmis* will respect Muslims.
8. *Zimmis* will courteously receive a Muslim wishing to attend their meetings.
9. *Zimmis* will not dress like Muslims.
10. They will not take Muslim names.
11. They will not ride horses with saddle and bridle.
12. They will not possess swords, bows or arrows.
13. They will not wear signet rings.
14. They will not openly sell or drink intoxicating liquor.
15. They will not abandon their traditional dress, which is a sign of their ignorance, in order that they may be distinguished from Muslims.
16. They will not openly practice their traditional customs amongst Muslims.
17. They will not build their houses in the neighbourhood of Muslims.
18. They will not carry or bury their dead near Muslim graveyards.
19. They will not mourn their dead loudly.
20. They will not buy Muslim slaves.[1]

In emphasizing such a covenant, Saiyid 'Ali was acting as an *'alim* and not as a sufi. Sultan Qutbu'd-Din adopted Persian dress and divorced one of his wives whom he had illegally married earlier. Occasionally he attended congregational prayers led by the Saiyid on a platform built at the site of the Kali Mandir, which he himself had helped to destroy. The demolition of the temple contravened the covenant; probably the Brahmans had not allowed Saiyid 'Ali's followers to stay in the temple and the infringement was used as a pretext and later a precedent set by the Saiyid in Kashmir.

When Saiyid 'Ali left Kashmir only a handful of Irani Saiyids were allowed by him to accompany him back to Iran. The remainder stayed in Kashmir to continue their work in their respective *khanqahs*, hoping the Saiyid to return when the opportunity was more favourable. He was destined, however, not to return and in about 1390, another eminent Kubrawiyya sufi, called Saiyid Hisari, whose ancestors came from Balkh, migrated to Kashmir from Hisar.[2] He was a very liberal mystic who became a favourite of Sultan Sikandar (1389–1413) and settled in Srinagar, where he remained for the rest of his life.

Saiyid Hisari's influence was, however, temporarily eclipsed by Mir Muhammad, the son of Saiyid 'Ali. Born in 774/1372 at Khuttalan, after completing his education in 796/1393 he migrated to Kashmir, providing the much-needed leadership of his father's various Saiyid

[1] *Zakhiratu'l-Muluk*, pp. 117-18.
[2] *Tarikh-i Kashmir*, f. 10a.

companions. Sultan Sikandar also became his disciple and built an imposing *khanqah* for the young migrant at the site where his father had first built the prayer platform. A powerful and influential noble in the Sultan's administration, Suha Bhatta, embraced Islam after instruction by Mir Muhammad. He adopted Saifu'd-Din as his Muslim name and married his daughter to his young teacher.

Under the influence of Mir and Suha Bhatta, the Sultan's policy changed. Ancient temples in Pompur, Vijabror, Martand, Anantnag, Sopur and Baramula were desecrated and demolished; many puritanical and discriminatory laws were introduced and the *jizya* or poll tax was imposed on Hindus for the first time in Kashmir. The persecution of Brahmans, their exclusion from the top spheres of government and the ensuing replacement by Irani migrants, gave the administration a veneer of orthodoxy. No existing sources explain such changes. According to Jonaraja, the Brahman historian of Kashmir, the king waited on Mir Muhammad daily 'humble as a servant' and 'like a student... took his lessons from him.' Muslim historians enthusiastically describe how the influence of Mir Muhammad uprooted infidelity from Kashmir.[1]

The Sultan began to neglect Mir Hisari and following the wave of orthodoxy in the administration a conflict developed between him and Mir Muhammad. Although Mir Muhammad was the son of Mir Saiyid 'Ali Hamadani, he was Hisari's junior and had even accepted from the veteran sufi, a *khilafat-nama*.[2] Before long Hisari's influence returned and according to Jonaraja, the Sultan 'fixed with some difficulty a limit to the advance of the great sea of the *Yavanas*[3] (Muslims), and abolished *turushkadanda* (*jizya*). This seems to have so disappointed Mir Muhammad that after a stay of twelve years, like his father he too decided to leave.

More than a dozen important disciples of the Mir chose to stay in Kashmir and together the remainder of the earlier Irani immigrants helped to strengthen the Persianized framework of the administration which had already been established. They seem to have developed into an organization based on similar lines to the Anatolian and Iranian types of the *Futuwwa*, with an emphasis on the uprooting of infidelity from Kashmir. However, their Kashmiri rivals and other new immigrants proved a serious challenge to their influence. It is clear from later developments that their presence led to a decline of the influence of Sanskrit and a corresponding fall of Brahman influence. The Irani khanqahs also became important links between the Kashmiri and Irani artisan and craft guilds (*asnaf*).

Another group of Kubrawiyya Iranis who provided the Kashmiri

[1] *Rajatarangini of Jonaraja*, pp. 59-60; Saiyid 'Ali, *Tarikh-i Kashmir*, ff. 11b-2b; *Baharistan-i Shahi*, ff. 26b, 35a; *Asraru'l-Abrar*, ff. 38b-42b.

[2] Saiyid 'Ali, *Tarikh-i Kashmir*, f. 10b.

[3] *Rajatarangini of Jonaraja*, p. 112.

government with administrative talents were known as the Bayhaqi Saiyids. The descendants of Taju'd-Din, a Saiyid sufi from Bayhaq,[1] they established family relations with the ruling house and the ministers of Kashmir. The Hamadani Saiyids and local Muslim pressure groups made life for the Bayhaqi Saiyids difficult, but their cooperation made the Kashmiri administration more broadly based. Sultan Zainu'l-'Abidin (1420–70) was a great patron of the Bayhaqis[2] and their support enabled him to crush the more fanatical elements in the administration and to embark on a policy of patronage towards indigenous culture. This included restoration of devastated temples. Supplanting the horrors of persecution by a programme of reconciliation towards Hindus, the Sultan attempted to heal the wounds of the outraged sensitivities of the Hindus. The Persianization of the administration, however, kept the Irani expatriates satisfied, and Sultan Zainu'l-'Abidin is rightly remembered by the Kashmiris as Bud Shah, the Great King.

The migration of sufis to Kashmir from Iran and Central Asia did not abate, but from the fifteenth century onwards local sufis also began to make their mark, both in the realm of scholarship and in mystical practices. One such sufi was Shaikh Hamza Makhdum, a great opponent of the Shi'i Isna 'Ashari movement; another was Shaikh Ya'qub Sarfi.

Shi'ism was introduced to Kashmir by Mir Shamsu'd-Din 'Iraqi who in 1481 arrived as an envoy of the Timurid Sultan, Husain Mirza (1469–1506). This was during the reign of Hasan Shah (1472–84). The Mir became the disciple of Shaikh Isma'il Kubrawiyya, a revered sufi in Kashmir. The Shaikh's disciple, Baba Ali Najar, and the Mir were very friendly. He found it more prudent to work under the name of a prominent Irani sufi, Nur Bakhsh. As an envoy, the Mir was unable to interfere in internal matters in Kashmir but his associations with the Kubrawiyya sufis enabled him to assess the possibility of introducing Shi'ism there. After the Mir's return to Herat, Sultan Husain Mirza, prompted by some secret reports he received about the Mir's activities, had him dismissed.

In 1501, the Mir again entered Kashmir.[3] His friend, Baba 'Ali Najar, who had succeeded the retired Shaikh Isma'il created an acceptable image for the Mir. Musa Raina, an influential government official, became his disciple and the Mir began initiating sufis into the order of Saiyid Muhammad Nur Bakhsh, although in reality he made them Isna 'Ashari Shi'is. Musa Raina helped the Mir to build a *khanqah* at Jadibal, a suburb of Srinagar which was intended to rival Mir Saiyid 'Ali's *khanqah*. But Saiyid Muhammad Bayhaqi, the influential vizier of Muhammad Shah, who reigned for the second time between 1493–1505, was to prove an inveterate enemy. The Mir, finding his presence in

[1] A district in Khurasan west of Nishapur.

[2] Saiyid 'Ali, *Tarikh-i Kashmir*, f. 21b; *Baharistan-i Shahi*, f. 60b.

[3] *Baharistan-i Shahi*, f. 72a.

Kashmir had become rather difficult left for Skardu in Ladakh, where he succeeded in converting a number of Buddhists to Shi'ism.[1]

In 1505 Fath Shah (1505–14) became Sultan for the second time and appointed Musa Raina his vizier. The Mir once more returned to Kashmir and an aggressive and discriminatory policy towards Hindus and Buddhists was re-introduced. Temples were demolished, land confiscated and non-Islamic Kashmiris were forcibly converted to Shi'ism. The mask of Nur Bakhshi's doctrines had been removed.

A second influential supporter of the Mir was Kaji Chak the vizier of Muhammad Shah, who ruled for the third time between 1516 and 1528. A large number of the Chak clan became Shi'i, and until the Mughal Mirza Haidar Dughlat (1540–51) seized the throne of Kashmir and violently repressed the Shi'i Chaks, the latter were a dominant force in the government.

After the fall of Mirza Haidar, a Chak dynasty was established in Kashmir which ruled between 1551 and 1586. The Chaks reversed the policy of Mirza Haidar and extended patronage both to the followers of Mir Saiyid 'Ali Hamadani and 'Iraqi. This enabled the Shi'is to propagate their faith once more.

Consequently many Suhrawardi sufis embarked on a mission of opposition to Shi'ism. The most significant of these was Shaikh Hamza Makhdum.[2] He was born in 900/1494 in the Baramula district, obtained a good education and was initiated into the Suhrawardiyya order by Saiyid Jamalu'd-Din Bukhari.[3] Shaikh Hamza was a deeply ecstatic mystic who would utter phrases reminiscent of Bayazid and Hallaj.[4] Showing no fear of the pro-Shi'i Chak dynasty he opposed Shi'ism strongly. Finally he was exiled from Srinagar by Sultan Ghazi Chak (1561–63), but after the end of Ghazi's reign Shaikh Hamza returned, dying in Srinagar on 24 Safar 984/23 May 1576.

Of Shaikh Hamza's many disciples who had been initiated in the Suhrawardi *silsila*, Baba Dawud was an eminent scholar. His verses, contained in the *Wirdu'l-Muridin*, and its commentary, *Dasturu's-Salikin*, in Persian, is a significant manual on mysticism. Based on current sufi authorities, the work enthusiastically describes the miracles of Shaikh Hamza.

Another outstanding Kashmiri sufi of the seventeenth century was the grammarian, Shaikh Ya'qub. After completing his early education in his native home, Shaikh Ya'qub spent a number of years at the feet of eminent sufis and scholars throughout Central Asia, Iran and Mecca. He was initiated into the Kubrawiyya order at Samarqand by Makhdum

[1] *Tuhfatu'l-Ahbab*, Srinagar, MS, p. 64.
[2] Saiyid 'Ali, *Tarikh-i Kashmir*, f. 24a; *Baharistan-i Shahi*, ff. 78b, 80a.
[3] *Tarikh-i Kashmir*, ff. 30a-b; *Asraru'l-Abrar*, ff. 128b-143a.
[4] Khwaja Ishaq Qari, *Chillatu'l-'Arifin*, Srinagar Research Department, MS., f. 60b; Saiyid 'Ali, *Tarikh-i Kashmir*, ff. 30a-b.

Kamalu'd-Din Shaikh Husain of Khwarazam. Ya'qub and another widely travelled Indian sufi, Shaikh Salim Chishti, were great friends. Shaikh Ya'qub's wide knowledge of Qur'anic interpretation and sufism made him a respected figure at the courts of Humayun and Akbar in Delhi. On the basis of the *Tamhidat* of 'Ainu'l-Quzat Hamadani, he attempted to prove that the divine title, *al-Hadi* (the guide), personified Muhammad and that *al-Muzill* (the tempter) personified Iblis or Satan and that both tended to strengthen the divine illumination.[1] His *Commentary on the Qur'an* has not survived, but collections of his poetry and a biography of the Prophet Muhammad have been published. Some sufi treatises by Shaikh Ya'qub and a Persian commentary on the great *Hadis* work, by Muhammad bin Isma'il al-Bukhari, the *Sahih*, remain in manuscript form.

Although he personally did not initiate Akbar's conquest of Kashmir, Shaikh Ya'qub's knowledge of the local situation eased the annexation of Kashmir by the Mughal empire in 1586. A frequent visitor to the Mughal court in Lahore, in 1594 he finally retired to Srinagar, where he died on 8 Zu'lqa'da, 1003/15 July 1595.[2]

[1] *Muntakhabu't-Tawarikh*, II, p. 259; *see Religious and intellectual history of the Muslims in Akbar's reign*, New Delhi, 1975, pp. 189-90.

[2] *Muntakhabu't-Tawarikh*, III, p. 148.

Chapter Five

The Qalandars, the Martyrs and the Legendary and Semi-legendary Saints

THE history of sufism has been made infinitely more colourful by the role of the qalandars. The eleventh century sufis, Abu Sa'id bin Abi'l Khair, Baba Tahir 'Uryan and Khwaja 'Abdu'llah Ansari all shared a profound interest in qalandars. Baba Tahir went to the extent of writing this quatrain:

> 'I am the mystic gypsy called Qalandar;
> I have neither fire, home nor monastery.
> By day I wander about the world, and at night
> I sleep with a brick under my head.'[1]

Khwaja 'Abdu'llah Ansari wrote a treatise entitled the *Qalandar Nama* which contains his conversations with a qalandar. As a student, the Khwaja's mind was constantly disturbed by a multitude of thoughts. One day a leading qalandar visited his school. He wore a *namd* or garment of coarse cloth but his face looked like that of a fairy. After formal greetings to students he began to talk on subjects such as the Divine Being and Attributes. The students, who were merely interested in a superficial type of knowledge, took no real interest in the qalandar's discourse. But Khwaja 'Abdu'llah was so impressed that he followed him into the mountains. There the qalandar dissuaded him from following the path of a wanderer, arguing that it imposed great stress on the mystics. It was by reducing oneself to the miserable state of a beggar, observed the qalandar, one could experience the real value of spiritual involvement.

According to the *Qalandar Nama*, qalandars should possess these qualities: humility, lowliness, selflessness, asceticism and renunciation.[2] Persian verses of the period enthusiastically glorify the spiritual attainments of qalandars. The *'Awarifu'l Ma'arif* distinguishes between two types of dervishes, the Qalandariyya and the *malmatis*. The former were so seized by the intoxication of 'tranquillity of the heart' (*qalb*) that they rejected normal social pleasantries and the *mores* of personal relationships. They performed obligatory, but not supererogatory prayers, and fasted. The Qalandariyya sought to violate orthodox features in

[1]Journal Asiatic Series VIII, VI, 1885, p. 516.

[2]Khwaja 'Abdu'llah Ansari, *Rasa'il-i Jami'*, Tehran, 1347/1968-69, pp. 92-9.

their behaviour. The *malamatis*, on the other hand, merely tried to conceal their spiritual achievements.[1] As Hujwiri explained at great length, *malamat* (blame) was the distinctive practice of the Qassaris[2] who violated religious laws and behaved in an offensive manner so that people would not bother them. Many sufis of different orders had recourse to *malamat*[3] practices but by the end of the twelfth century, the Qalandariyya order emerged as a separate movement with wandering dervishes wearing a distinctive dress and living differently to both *malamatis* and sufis in general.

According to al-Maqrizi the Qalandariyyas first appeared in Damascus in *c.* 610/1213–14. One of the early founders was a Spanish Arab from Egypt called Yusuf. In al-Maqrizi's account of the Qalandariyyas he wrote: 'They made it a rule to lay nothing aside and never to amass this world's goods, but in his (Yusuf's) time they did not wear coarse garments nor subject themselves to any mortification or any devotional exercises, saying it was sufficient for them that their hearts were at peace with God. They wanted nothing more; they made no effort to attain a degree of virtue more eminent than this state of peace at heart. To show their indifference as regards everything outside their ideal, they took the course of throwing off the restraint of all the laws of politeness usually observed in society.'[4]

Another founder of the Qalandariyyas, who was well-known in Damascus, was Shaikh Jamalu'd-Din of Sawa.[5] Between 1210 and 1225 he was a student there, before moving to Damietta on the Nile in Egypt. The reasons prompting him to shave his beard and eyebrows, later adopted as the distinguishing feature of the Qalandariyya, are described differently. Here is Ibn Battuta's story. A very handsome man, Jamalu'd-Din became the love object of a woman in Sawa. Failing to attract the Shaikh, she lured him to her house on the pretext of reading a letter, then, locking the house, she trapped the innocent Shaikh inside. Shaikh Jamalu'd-Din hid in the lavatory where he shaved off his beard and eyebrows. So disgusted was the woman that her passion instantly abated and she ordered him to be thrown out of her house. In gratitude for his unscathed virtue the Shaikh retained his shaved appearance. To his disciples the custom became a revered tradition, as did their habit of never being without a razor.[6]

Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Chiragh-i Dihli described Shaikh Jamalu'd-Din of Sawa as a *mufti* and a travelling library for he could give legal opinions

[1] *'Awarifu'l-Ma'arif* (*Ihya' al-'Ulum*), I, pp. 339-67.

[2] Nicholson, pp. 183-84, *See* Chapter One, pp. 41-42, *supra*.

[3] Nicholson, pp. 62-9.

[4] *EI* (old), III, p. 677; H.A.R. Gibb and J.H. Kramer, *Shorter encyclopaedia of Islam*, pp. 214-15.

[5] Gibb identifies it with Sawaq or Sawaj, a city between Hamadan and Tehran, H.A.R. Gibb, *The travels of Ibn Battuta*, Cambridge, I, 1958, p. 38.

[6] H.A.R. Gibb, *The travels of Ibn Battuta*, I, pp. 37-9.

extempore, without recourse to references. Once the *mufti* was sitting with a holy man, when a group of people appeared wearing only Indian loin cloths round their private parts, pieces of blanket on their shoulders and iron pieces, probably necklaces, bangles or chains. After they had left the holy man was full of praise for their life of freedom. *Mufti* Shaikh Jamalu'd-Din replied he would devise an even better way of life. Soon afterwards he was seized with ecstasy; he shaved his beard, put on a coarse woollen cloth and facing Mecca sat in a graveyard to meditate. The holy man visited him there, and at his request, poisoned boiling water was administered to him which he drank as if it were cool liquid. Later some wise men who happened to pass through the graveyard upbraided the Shaikh for his shaven beard, which was contrary to Islamic law. He bent his head, and as he raised it exposed a chin covered with a long white beard.[1] An identical story is related by Ibn Battuta, but in his version the wise man is replaced by Qazi Ibn-i 'Imad.

Another founder of Qalandariyya traditions was Hasan al-Jawaliqi. An Irani, during the reign of al-Malik al-'Adil Ketbogha (1294–96) he founded a monastery of qalandars near Cairo.[2] The *Fawaidu'l-Fu'ad* and other Indian mystical writings do not distinguish between the Qalandariyya and the Jawaliqi traditions. Both groups are depicted as being strongly hostile to the settled *khanqah* life of the Suhrawardiyya and the Chishtiyya, considering it unholy and binding in its duty to assist homeless dervishes. Although the Chishtiyya records are our only source of information about the Qalandariyyas and the Jawaliqis, and represent their behaviour as shocking and sacrilegious, the authors admit that among these radicals were genuine spiritualists.[3] On the whole, dervishes from both orders were reported as performing incredible miracles, one example being wall-smashing with a single blow of the hand.[4] Mongol domination of Central Asia and Iran facilitated the movement of the Qalandariyyas and the Jawaliqi groups from Turkey and Egypt to India. Passing through Multan, they often came into conflict with Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya, but such experiences were counteracted by the generosity of Baba Farid. The contact of qalandars with Nath-yogis, also wandering throughout that part of the world, influenced them to wear ear-rings. Another custom they shared with the yogis was the consumption of a type of grass, probably Indian hemp,[5] and some other drugs which were popular not only in India but throughout the Middle East.

From the Punjab, the displeased qalandars moved to Delhi creating scenes wherever they saw a khanqah. Some went as far east as Bengal.

[1] *Khairu'l-Majalis*, pp. 131-32.
[2] Maqrizi, *Khitat*, IV, Cairo, 1908-9, p. 301.
[3] *FF*, pp. 56, 70, 240, 242.
[4] *See* Chapter Two, pp. 141-42, *supra*.
[5] *Khairu'l-Majalis*, p. 130.

In the reign of Balban Tughril, his rebel governor in Bengal became deeply devoted to one particular qalandar. Tughril gave the qalandar and his followers a huge quantity of gold, enabling them to wear gold necklaces, bangles and ear-rings instead of iron. In 1281 Balban crushed Tughril's rebellion and in the ensuing reprisals mercilessly slaughtered the rebels, as well as the qalandars who were hung from gibbets.[1]

In the thirteenth century, however, many qalandars began to adopt the settled life of the *khanqah*. The earliest moves towards a sedentary existence can be seen amongst members of the Qalandariyya-Chishtiyya, qalandars who were initiated into the Chishtiyya order and had been brought to India by Shah Khizr Rumi.

According to legend, Shah Khizr was a disciple of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-'Aziz Makki and the latter was a companion of the Prophet Muhammad. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-'Aziz was so profoundly absorbed in asceticism and solitude that, according to tradition, he shaved his head, beard and moustache. When the Prophet Muhammad saw him he greatly approved and remarked that the people in Paradise looked just like him. At his request the Prophet allowed him to lead a retired life in a mountain cave and the Prophet Muhammad himself prayed for his welfare and longevity. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-'Aziz reappeared from the cave when 'Ali bin Abi Talib was Caliph and after swearing allegiance to him, the Shaikh reverted to his hermit's life in a cave. He reappeared in the third century Hijri and became the disciple of Bayazid Bastami. Once more he retired to the solitude of the forests, emerging after two hundred years to initiate Khizr Rumi. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-'Aziz then went to Ajodhan, and like Imam Mahdi of the Shi'is, disappeared into a grotto (*sardabad*) on the outskirts of the town. Before his final disappearance he prophesied he would reappear at the same time as the last Imam Mahdi before the Day of Resurrection.[2]

Although considerable legendary elements are ascribed to Shah Khizr Rumi, nevertheless he is a historical personality. According to Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq he arrived in Delhi from his native Anatolia during the lifetime of Shaikh Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki. Even then he performed exciting miracles. Nevertheless, at his own request he became the disciple of Shaikh Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki.[3] According to the *Mir'atu'l-Asrar*, Shaikh Qutbu'd-Din allowed him to maintain the dress and customs of a qalandar.[4] From Delhi, Shah Khizr Rumi went to eastern U.P. and at Surhurpur, near Jaunpur, initiated Saiyid Najmu'd-Din Ghausu'd-Dahr as his disciple. Later he returned to Anatolia where he died in 750/1349–50.

The disciples of Saiyid Najmu'd-Din flourished in Jaunpur and also in many towns of eastern U.P. and around Lucknow.[5]

[1] *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, p. 91.
[2] Muhammad Taqi, *Nafhatu'l Anbariya*, Lucknow, 1920, pp. 21-33.
[3] *AA*, p. 50. [4] *Mir'atu'l-Asrar*, ff. 25b-25a.
[5] *Nafhatu'l Anbariya*, pp. 54-77.

Qalandariyya-Chishtiyya legends claim that the celebrated qalandar, Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din Abu (Bu) 'Ali Qalandar of Panipat, was either the disciple of Shah Khizr Rumi or that of Saiyid Najmu'd-Din. This linked him with Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki. According to Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq the claims that Shaikh Abu 'Ali was the disciple of Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar or of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' were unauthentic.[1] 'Abdu'r Rahman Chishti compromised by asserting that Shaikh Abu 'Ali Qalandar had been initiated into the Chishtiyya order by the spirit of Shaikh Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki.[2] Whatever his spiritual lineage Shaikh Abu 'Ali Qalandar was a scholar and a stern ascetic who renounced the world and became totally engrossed in self-mortification and contemplation. As a qalandar he refused to observe the rules of the *Shari'a*. Nevertheless he approved when Maulana Ziya'u'd-Din Sunnami, an orthodox *'alim*, clipped his moustache to the length required by holy law. The Qalandariyya system did not prevent Shaikh Abu 'Ali from writing letters in which he explained mysticism and its many controversial aspects. Although some *diwans* ascribed to him are apocryphal, the verses firmly identified as those of the Shaikh's are of a very high merit.

In a letter Shaikh Abu 'Ali Qalandar wrote that the recognition of Beauty was a step leading to the understanding of the Beloved. This made the lover and the Beloved identical. Beloveds were created in the form of human beings in order that they might lead people to the righteous path. Both heaven and hell were born of the beauty of the Lover and none of these were meant for any one but lovers. Heaven was the stage of union; hell was the station of separation and was intended for enemies. He went on to explain this by using as an example a lump of sugar. One could make hundreds of sugar balls from it and even turn it into different shapes such as animals. Then they were no longer sugar but when broken they returned to sugar again.[3]

Although Shaikh Abu 'Ali lived for some time in the village of Karnal, most of his life was spent in Panipat where his father, Salar Fakhru'd-Din, had migrated from Iraq. After the Shaikh's death on 13 Ramazan 724/3 September 1324 both the people of Karnal and Panipat claimed his grave to be in their respective towns. However the Shaikh is well known as Sharafu'd-Din Panipati and therefore it is reasonable to assume he was buried in his home town.[4]

Although it was a Chishti saint of such stature as Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Chiragh who was violently stabbed by a qalandar, gradually many itinerant qalandars became absorbed into the Chishti order. Hamid, the celebrated author of the *Khairu'l-Majalis* was a qalandar. The verses

[1] *AA*, p. 129.
[2] *Mir'atu'l-Asrar*, f. 26a.
[3] *AA*, p. 129.
[4] *Mir'atu'l-Asrar*, ff. 25b-26a; *AA*, pp. 128-29.

of Mas'ud-i Bak and Saiyid Muhammad Ja'far Makki extolling the mystic ecstasy of the qalandars helped to soften many earlier bitternesses.

Among the Suhrawardiyyas, Shaikh Fakhru'd-Din 'Iraqi was a qalandar and as described earlier, even after his initiation by Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya he continued to live as a wandering dervish. Another exception was Shaikh Lal Shahbaz Qalandar. As also mentioned previously, Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din disliked qalandars intensely and certainly never encouraged their unwelcome visits. Lal Shahbaz was an exception and was adopted as his disciple. Lal Shahbaz's real name was Mir Saiyid 'Usman and he was a native of Sehwan in the Sind. Following the *Shari'a* held no interest for Lal Shahbaz who like the *malamatis*, indulged in ecstatic dancing. Often he wore a red dress, hence his name *lal* (red). Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya gave him the title 'Shahbaz,' the noblest species of falcon. A large number of miracles are said to have been performed by him and even his tomb in Sind is known for innumerable miraculous feats.[1]

Other groups of qalandars claimed initiation into the Suhrawardiyya order. One such group, the descendants of the disciples of Saiyid Raju Qattal, known as the Qalandariyya-Suhrawardiyya Murtazawi, settled in eastern U.P.[2]

Members of another Qalandariyya-Suhrawardiyya branch in the hills near Alwar were the disciples of Saiyid Shah 'Abdu'r-Rasul and was known as the Rasuli branch.[3]

Some Qalandariyyas traced their spiritual descent from the 'King of Dervishes,' Saiyid Shah Ni'matu'lla Shah of Kirman. Although no birth date has been documented we know that the Saiyid died on 22 Rajab 834/5 April 1431 in Mahan near Kirman. His apocalyptic sayings concerning the 'Mischief of the Last Day' and the advent of the Mahdi also contain an allegorical declaration of many mysteries and revelations and are believed to allude to future events in the world.[4]

The Ni'mati-Qalandariyya believed that their founder accompanied Sultan Mu'izzu'd-Din Sam on his campaign against Prithviraj and was killed at Hansi. According to these qalandars, Shah Ni'matu'llah's tomb was in Hansi, not in Kirman, as was commonly believed. A number of qalandars of this order were very prominent in India between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries.[5]

Another group of qalandars were known as the Haidaris after their founder, a Turkic saint called Haidar. He lived in Sawa in Kuhistan (Mountain Land), a province about seventy miles south of Nishapur.[6]

[1] *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, f. 542b.
[2] Ahmad 'Ali, *Qasr-i 'Arifan*, Oriental College Magazine, Lahore, May 1965, pp. 191-92.
[3] ibid, p. 192.
[4] *Literary history of Persia*, IV, pp. 463-69.
[5] *Qasr-i 'Arifan*, pp. 182-87.
[6] *The lands of the eastern Caliphate*, p. 356.

A large number of miracles are attributed to him. One legend is that in summer he would walk through fire, and in winter he would stand in the snow. Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' alleged that when seized with ecstasy he would hold rods of red hot iron in his hands and, as if they were wax, fashion necklaces and bangles, which he could then wear. His followers, known as Haidaris, also wore iron jewellery but none ever reached the mystic heights of their founder.[1] In 617/1220, the Mongols invaded Sawa. A curious story related by Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya', concerning this invasion is noteworthy, not for its novelty, but for the sufi response to the Mongol invasion of Iran.[2] Similar stories have been ascribed to other sufis but this one is significant because it reveals the superstitious beliefs associated with the power of dervishes. Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din's account is as follows:

> 'When the Mongols were marching towards India, Haidar warned his followers to flee before the invader reached Sawa. When they asked him why he felt so threatened he replied that a dervish accompanying the troops had placed them under his protection. Haidar added that he had attempted to stop the dervish but had been miraculously thrown to the ground. Such an action, he asserted, indicated that the Mongols would be victorious and therefore all the dervishes should attempt an escape.'[3]

The town of Sawa where Haidar lived and was buried gradually became known as the *Turbat-i Haidari* (the Tomb of Haidar). Ibn Battuta noticed his followers wearing iron rings through their ears, hands and other parts of their bodies.[4] Jamali adds that the Haidaris passed round iron rods through their male organs and because both ends were sealed called them *sikh-i muhr* (rods of the seal).[5] A custom acquired from the Hindu Naga *sanyasis*, it indicated their determination to remain celibate. The Haidaris like other qalandars adopted the practice of ear piercing from the Nath-yogis or *Kanphata* yogis (Split Ear Yogis).

The most prominent Indian Haidari was Shaikh Abu Bakr Tusi Haidari, who settled in Delhi in the mid-thirteenth century. There he demolished a temple on a site on the banks of the Jamna where he built a *khanqah* and organized *sama'* gathering. Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' was a frequent visitor of Abu Bakr as was Shaikh Jamalu'd-Din of Hansi when he was in Delhi. The latter gave Shaikh Abu Bakr the title Baz-i Safid (White Falcon) symbolizing his rare mystical achievements.[6]

[1] *FF*, p. 22-3. [2] Chapter One, pp. 92-93, *supra*.
[3] *FF*, p. 22.
[4] *The lands of the eastern Caliphate*, p. 356.
[5] Jamali, p. 67.
[6] *AA*, pp. 73-4; Jamali, p. 67, *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, f. 532a.

Shaikh Abu Bakr's relations with his other contemporaries were not so cordial. An early conflict with Nuru'd-Din Malik Yar Parran is recorded. The Malik was a native of Lar in Fars who had migrated to Delhi during the reign of Balban. He was attached to the *silsila* of Shaikh Abu Ishaq Kaziruni. In Delhi he planned to build a *khanqah* near Shaikh Abu Bakr's but the latter, considering it an encroachment of his territory, insisted that a *farman* first be brought from the Sultan. According to Jamali, the Sultan was in Thatta, although it was more likely he was in Bengal. Wherever he was, Shaikh Nuru'd-Din brought a *farman* so quickly that the impressed Shaikh Abu Bakr gave him the title Parran (Flier).[1]

The mortal wounding of the sufi, Sidi Maula, by the disciples of Shaikh Abu Bakr Tusi's became a most significant event in the reign of Sultan Jalalu'd-Din Khalji. Sidi Maula came from what was known as the Upper Region (presumably the Helmand river region). As an emigrant *en route* to Delhi he visited Baba Farid before the latter's death in 1265. Finding him ambitious, the Baba warned Sidi Maula to avoid the company of Maliks and Amirs for such associations were calamitous for dervishes. The advice fell on deaf ears. Sidi Maula's life was to become the great example which justified the Chishti principle of unreserved non-involvement in politics and all power struggles.

During the reign of Balban, Sidi Maula spent money recklessly in an unsuccessful attempt to make contacts with prominent nobles. The reign of Mu'izzu'd-Din Kaiqubad was marked by the levity and indifference of its administration. During this period Sidi Maula's lavish spending had better results and he managed to gather around him a large number of followers. When Sultan Jalalu'd-Din Khalji was on the throne of Delhi Sidi Maula's popularity continued rising. The Sultan's eldest son, the Khan-i Khanan, whom Sidi called his son, became a devotee and the Khan's nobles and dignitaries naturally became closely connected with Sidi. An eminent qazi, Jalal Kashani Balbani, was among the regular visitors to the Sidi's *khanqah*. Many outstanding nobles and disgruntled generals of Balban's reign, such as Kotwal Biranjtan and Hathiya Payak, became Sidi's disciples, mainly prompted by financial considerations and by what they saw as his political potential.

According to Barani, Sidi's habits were strange. He would perform strenuous ascetic exercises but never attend Friday prayers. Although his clothing was the simplest and his food humble, his guests were fed lavishly. Travellers from many countries thronged to his *khanqah* and they, along with the population of Delhi, benefited from his huge feasts. Barani was amongst the beneficiaries of Sidi's fine table. The latter's financial sources remained a mystery; he accepted neither land grants nor any other type of gift. Whenever he purchased anything or wished to pay someone he would specify a spot and freshly coined money would be

[1]Jamali, p. 67; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, f. 532b.

found. From this grew the story that he was an alchemist.

A plot to assassinate the Sultan allegedly led by Sidi Maula was exposed. Although the conspirators were imprisoned there was little evidence for a conviction. The 'ulama' argued that trial by fire was nowhere sanctioned by the *Shari'a*. The nobles and Maliks involved in the plot were transferred from the capital. However, an appropriate punishment for Sidi Maula, the alleged arch-conspirator could not be found. He was brought to the throne in chains. The assembly including Shaikh Abu Bakr Tusi Haidari and some of his disciples, were to assist in the sentencing. Before anything was decided and after the Sultan's request for assistance in the decision, a Haidari leapt forward mortally slashing his fellow dervish with a razor. Arkali Khan, one of the royal princes, beckoned the elephant drivers who trampled Sidi to death. Such an unlawful execution was deplored by the orthodox and Barani believed that the bloodshed of a holy man called down divine retribution on Sultan Jalalu'd-Din Khalji. The event, according to the orthodox, was a watershed in the Sultan's reign and was followed by a steady decline in his rule. The immediate repercussions were an unprecedented dust storm which swept through Delhi and a severe drought and famine throughout the empire. Not a drop of rain fell in the Siwalik region and the Hindu cultivators were forced to migrate to the capital. Starving people began to commit suicide in groups of twenties and thirties by drowning themselves in the Jamna.[1] The following year the country was inundated with floods. To Barani the moral was clear—no king could afford to kill a dervish.

'Isami, an earlier authority, argued that *khirqa-poshan-i kham* (sufi impostors) falsely accused Sidi Maula of being an alchemist and the pivot of the plot to replace the king.[2] The available evidence tends to indicate that it was the Khan-i Khanan, Arkali Khan's rival who was the real conspirator and Sidi Maula a mere tool. The belief that the latter's finances came from alchemy or a divinely inspired source were myths; the funds were provided by the Khan-i Khanan and by merchants from abroad, as the Balbani nobles who were involved in the plot were unable to finance him themselves because of their own impecuniosity. Arkali Khan had no difficulty in enlisting the support of sufis who were friendly to his cause and the ambitious Shaikh Abu Bakr Tusi chose to support Arkali Khan, rather than his rival, the Khan-i Khanan.

Shaikh Abu Bakr's followers declined owing to a lack of leadership. However, the wandering Haidaris survived for many centuries. Ibn Battuta gives the following account of a Haidari party he met in a village near Amroha in *c*. 1342 AD. He says:

> 'There came to me a company of poor brethren who had iron rings on their necks and arms, and whose chief was a coal-black negro.

[1] *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, pp. 208-12; *AA*, p. 73.
[2] 'Isami, *Futuhu's-Salatin*, pp. 215-16.

They belonged to the corporation known as the Haidariya and they spent one night with us. Their chief asked me to supply him with firewood that they might light it for their dance, so I charged the governor of that district, who was 'Aziz known as al-Khammar..., to furnish it. He sent about ten loads of it, and after the night prayer they kindled it, and at length, when it was a mass of glowing coals, they began their musical recital and went into that fire, still dancing and rolling about in it. Their chief asked me for a shirt and I gave him one of the finest texture; he put it on and began to roll about in the fire with it on and to beat the fire with his sleeves until it was extinguished and dead. He then brought me the shirt showing not a single trace of burning on it, at which I was greatly astonished.'[1]

Ibn Battuta points out the similarities between the practices current in the order of Shaikh Ahmad bin 'Ali al-Rifa'i (1106–82) popularly known as the Rifa'iyyas of Egypt, Iraq, Syria and Turkey, and of the Haidaris. The following description relates to the Rifa'iyyas of Wasit in Iraq:

'When the afternoon prayers had been said, drums and kettle-drums were beaten and the poor brethren began to dance. After this they prayed the sunset prayer and brought in the repast, consisting of rice-bread, fish, milk and dates. When all had eaten and prayed the first night prayer, they began to recite their *zikr*, with the shaikh Ahmad sitting on the prayer-carpet of his ancestor..., then they began the musical recital. They had prepared loads of firewood which they kindled into a flame, and went into the midst of it dancing; some of them rolled in the fire, and others ate it in their mouths, until finally they extinguished it entirely. This is their regular custom and it is the peculiar characteristic of this corporation of Ahmadi brethren. Some of them will take a large snake and bite its head with their teeth until they bite it clean through.'[2]

The relationship of the Haidaris with the court of Muhammad bin Tughluq is unknown, but the Sultan, who was deeply interested in yogis and the different mystic movements, undoubtedly would not have ignored the Haidaris. It is possible the orthodox may have kept the Haidaris from Firuz's court, as there is no mention of their presence there. Under the provincial dynasties, the influence of qalandars, and specifically the Haidaris and Jwaliqis, greatly increased. Their main centres were in Jaunpur and the Bengal Sultanate, but their significance should not be underestimated elsewhere.

Qalandars were frequent visitors at the court of the Lodis and the

[1]H.A.R. Gibb, *The travels of Ibn Battuta*, II, Cambridge, 1962, pp. 274-75.
[2]ibid, pp. 273-74.

doors of a large number of his nobles were also open to them. After the accession of Sultan Sikandar Lodi, there was a struggle for power between the new ruler and Barbak Shah of Jaunpur. There is a story that a qalandar appeared at the Sultan's camp and, taking his hands, wished him success. The Sultan pulled his hands away and reproached the dervish saying that in a battle between two Muslims, the leader who represented the interests of Islam and would best promote his subjects' welfare should succeed.[1]

An anecdote in the *Tarikh-i Dawudi* tells how, surrounded by qalandars, the Emperor Babur visited the court of Sultan Sikandar Lodi. The Sultan recited a verse implying that mere head-shaving failed to make one a qalandar. Babur retorted that by donning a crown and assuming airs of superiority one did not necessarily understand the laws of kingship. Babur and the qalandars were not reproached, but afterwards Sultan Sikandar regretted he had allowed Babur to get away.[2] The story is, of course, absurd, and has been devised around Babur's later image as a ruler who was fiercely proud of his qalandar associations.

Warrior saints

The early fourteenth century saw the growth of legends about several warrior saints. One of these was Sipah Salar Mas'ud Ghazi, popularly known as Ghazi Miyan whose tomb, alleged to be in Bahraich in eastern U.P., is now, as it has been since the fourteenth century, a centre of popular pilgrimage. Prince Nasiru'd-Din Mahmud (1246–66) who sought refuge in Bahraich to protect himself against the intrigues of his rivals, is said to have fought several battles against the local Hindu chiefs[3] and from there marched on to Delhi under his mother's leadership, to seize the throne. There is no mention of Salar Mas'ud in the history of the Ilbari Turks but according to Amir Khusraw's *I'jaz-i Khusrawi* Salar Mas'ud was a well-known saint.[4] Probably it was one of Prince Nasiru'd-Din's fallen generals who was the real occupant of the grave which was to become the centre of the Salar Mas'ud's legend. By the reign of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq the legend had been greatly expanded, although certain accretions were also developed in subsequent years.

The first visit to the tomb of any great importance was made by no less a personality than Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq. After suppressing the rebellion of Ainu'l-Mulk in 740–41/1340–41 the Sultan, accompanied by Ibn Battuta, visited Salar Mas'ud's mausoleum at Bahraich. The Moorish traveller later wrote that strange stories were current about the wars in which Salar Mas'ud had been involved, although he did not care

[1] *Tarikh-i Dawudi*, p. 45.
[2] ibid, pp. 63-64.
[3] *Tabaqat-i Nasiri*, pp. 208-9.
[4] *I'jaz-i Khusrawi*, II, Lucknow, 1876, p. 155.

to clarify his statement.[1] According to Barani, Salar Mas'ud was an outstanding warrior in the army of Mahmud of Ghazna.[2]

After his visit Muhammad bin Tughluq gave liberally to Salar Mas'ud's tomb, but the reforming Sultan Firuz Shah Tughluq was reported to have gone to extreme limits in exhibiting his devotion to the tomb. In 776/1374–75 he visited Bahraich and stayed there for some time. According to Shams Siraj 'Afif, one night Salar Mas'ud appeared to the Sultan in a dream and indicated that the ageing monarch should spend more time in prayer and prepare himself for the Day of Judgment. Next morning, in the manner of a sufi novice the Sultan shaved his head and a large number of Khans and Maliks followed suit. 'Afif traces the beginning of the orthodoxy of Sultan Firuz Shah and the abolition of non-Islamic taxes to this period.[3] Although Sikandar Lodi banned the processions of pilgrims carrying spears[4] on their annual visit to the tomb of Salar Mas'ud, the festival was only stopped temporarily.

According to Abu'l-Fazl, Salar Mas'ud was one of the martyrs of the Ghaznawid armies. Asserting Salar's popularity he adds that people from distant places carrying multi-coloured flags and numerous presents made pilgrimages to the Salar's tomb at Bahraich. A large number of people going to Bahraich from Agra went without sleep for several nights while revelling in the neighbourhood of the capital. In 1561, Akbar, disguised as an ordinary citizen secretly visited the crowd which had assembled *en route* to Bahraich.[5]

With considerable indifference Shaikhu'l-Hidaya, a sufi from Khairabad near Lucknow, informed Mulla Bada'uni that Salar Mas'ud was an Afghan who had met a martyr's death.[6] According to Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq the carrying of flags was a later innovation. He contradicts the popular belief that Salar Mas'ud was a disciple of Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Chishti.[7]

The most colourful legend of Ghazi Miyan was developed by Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman Chishti during Jahangir's reign and is contained in his *Mir'at-i Mas'udi*. He claims to have based his account on an early Ghaznawid history entitled the *Tarikh-i Mulla Muhammad Ghaznawi*. This work is not referred to by any Ghaznawid authority and seems to have been written to satisfy popular curiosity about Salar Mas'ud at a later date. The Mulla, however, claimed he was a servant of Sultan

[1] *Voyages*, III, pp. 355-56.

[2] Barani, *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, p. 491.

[3] Afif, *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, pp. 372-73.

[4] *Tabaqat-i Akbari*, p. 336; *Tarikh-i Dawudi*, p. 38.

[5] *Akbar Nama*, II, p. 145.

[6] *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, III, p. 26.

[7] *AA*, p. 162. According to the *Mir'at-i Sikandari*, Shah 'Alam Bukhari is said to have observed that Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Chishti would transfer requests made to him to Salar Mas'ud and to have remarked that he should also hand all other worldly matters to Malik Dawaru'l-Mulk, p. 127. *See* also Chapter Four, p. 282, *supra*.

Mahmud and of Salar Mas'ud. He also refers to Salar Mas'ud as the Prince of Martyrs. According to Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman, the work originally contained a detailed account of Sultan Mahmud's wars, but finding no demand for the latter, he preferred to select material relating to Salar Mas'ud.

Like many authors of similar works, the Shaikh claimed that the spirit of the Prince of Martyrs had appeared to him in a vision and approved of his planned work, even promising occasional assistance with its execution. Many miraculous statements and narratives incorporated in the *Mir'at-i Mas'udi* were, according to its author, confirmed by the spirit of the martyr saint and Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman Chishti believed his work to be an authentic history of Salar Mas'ud.

According to the *Mir'at-i Mas'udi*, after having subdued and Islamized the kingdom of Rum and the countries of Turan and Iran in 401/1011, Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna received a deputation of Ajmer Muslims seeking assistance against the Hindu chiefs who were busily attempting to liquidate Muzaffar, their ruler. The Shaikh mentions that the town of Ajmer did not recite the *khutba* in the name of the Sultan. In return for his assistance it was promised that in future this would be done. In consultation with his vizier, Khwaja Hasan Maimandi, the Sultan despatched a substantial force, under his brother-in-law Salar Shahu, to help Muzaffar. Arriving in Ajmer, the Salar defeated the Hindu chiefs and conquered the neighbouring region. Mahmud rewarded the Salar by sending him at his camp a robe of honour and also his sister, Salar's wife. Salar then conquered Kanauj. On 21 Sha'ban 405/14 February 1015, their son Mas'ud was born. Sultan Mahmud bestowed the kingdom of Hindustan jointly on Salar Shahu and his infant son.

Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman continues that in the course of the next ten years Salar Shahu defeated many Indian princes. During his childhood, Mas'ud was involved in warfare; he served Sultan Mahmud during his Somnath expedition in 1025–26 and persuaded the Sultan to smash the Somnath idol. Khwaja Hasan Maimandi who was jealous of the influence of Shahu and Mas'ud, strongly opposed the suggestion, but the advice of Mas'ud prevailed.

The Somnath period marks the beginning of Mas'ud's legendary career as a great warrior. Seizing Multan and Delhi he crossed the Ganges and camped at Satrikh in the Barabanki district, near Lucknow, where his father joined him. On 25 Shawwal 423/4 October 1032, Salar Shahu died from natural causes. Continuing the war, Mas'ud despatched many columns from his base at Satrikh. He himself fought in battle and successfully conquered the area which is now eastern U.P. On 14 Rajab 424/15 June 1033, he was struck at Bahraich by an arrow from a Hindu chief and died aged nineteen.

After Salar Mas'ud's death, according to the author of the *Mir'at-i Mas'udi*, infidelity returned to Ajmer and idolatry was once more revived

in India. Islam was ultimately restored there by Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Chishti. Although 'Abdu'r-Rahman Chishti believed that the sources mentioned in his preface were sufficient evidence for holy men, for the benefit of the more critical he wrote in his conclusion that his history had been corroborated by a learned Hindu Brahman of Bahraich from his own Sanskrit sources.[1]

Such an exercise by Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman would have gone a long way in satisfying a section of the orthodox who were critical of the many innovations in the commemoration of the great exploits of the holy martyr. To the common Muslims who remembered Salar Mas'ud Ghazi with pet names such as *Bale Miyan* (Revered Boy), *Bale Pir* (Boy Saint) and *Hateli Pir* (Obstinate Saint), no historical perspective was needed. To the Hindus who considered him a saint of miraculous power, the number of their brethren he killed or Islamized was then, as it is now, meaningless. To Muslims and Hindus alike, Salar Mas'ud was the great local saint of eastern India.

Offerings of all kinds are even now made to the tomb of Salar Mas'ud. Although his *'urs* is celebrated on 12, 13 and 14 Rajab, the flags are taken to the tomb on the first Sunday of the Hindi month Jaith (May-June). After the completion of the wheat and barley harvest, the leisure of the peasants in June is devoted to celebrations marking the Ghazi Miyan festival. A number of symbolic graves scattered from western U.P. to eastern Bengal represent events in Salar Mas'ud's life and are worshipped with an equivalent fervour to that of the one in Bahraich. Those not able to travel to the town celebrate festivals at these substitute graves. Both Hindus and Muslims in many villages in eastern U.P. feature the grave of a martyr, who is worshipped by both groups. The Muslim and Hindu puritanical and revivalist movements have failed to undermine their popularity.

Amongst the Bengali warrior saints whose career can be traced more accurately is Shaikh Jalal of Sylhet. According to the *Gulzar-i Abrar* Shaikh Jalal was a Turkistani by birth and a *khalifa* of Saiyid Ahmad Yasawi of the *Silsila-i Khwajgan*. At his request, Jalal's *pir* blessed him that he might succeed in the lesser *jihad* or warfare against infidelity in a *dar al-harb* (Land outside the Islamic *oecumenè*) in the same way as he had directed him towards success in the higher (spiritual) *jihad*. The Saiyid ordered his seven hundred (a mythical figure) most eminent disciples to accompany the Shaikh. Their expedition was not an ascetic or peaceful one. The booty gained from their warring enabled them to live luxuriously. Shaikh Jalal would leave various saints along the way to propagate Islam in the newly acquired territories. When the Shaikh reached Sirhat (Sylhet) he was accompanied by 313 followers. Raja Gaur Govind, heading one hundred thousand footmen and several thousand horsemen, engaged the small band in a hotly contested battle

[1] *Mir'at-i Mas'udi*, author's collection, f. 3a; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, f. 520a.

and was thoroughly defeated. The entire region fell to Shaikh Jalal who apportioned the land among his followers, thus enabling them to take wives and settle down. The Shaikh himself, however, did not marry and came to be known as Shah Jalal Mujarrad (Bachelor). Sylhet was the share of Shaikh Nuru'l-Huda Abu'l Karamat Sai'di Husaini. One of Shaikh Nuru'l-Huda's descendants was Shaikh 'Ali Sher Bangali, the author of a book entitled the *Sharh-i Nuzhatu'l-Arwah*. The account summarized by Ghausi Shattari was based on the preface of the above work.[1]

Sylhet was finally conquered by Shamsu'd-Din Firuz (1301–22), the enterprising governor of Bengal. Apparently Shaikh Jalal was driven by the Mongol invasions to Baghdad and from there he went to Multan and Uch. At Uch it is possible that he was formally initiated into the Suhrawardiyya order as is suggested by local legends. His visit to Delhi, *en route* to Bengal, and a meeting with the city's famous Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya', are also not improbable. He may have reached Bengal in the early fourteenth century and selected the newly conquered Sylhet for his spiritual and meditational activities. Ibn Battuta confused Shaikh Jalal with Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din Tabrizi, and so many later writers following the Moorish traveller did likewise. In 1345 Ibn Battuta journeyed especially through Chittagong and Kamrup to visit the saint. Shaikh Jalal told him that he had seen the last 'Abbasid Caliph, al-Musta'sim Bi'llah (640/1242–656/1258). Ibn Battuta completed his book in December 1357. The Shaikh was reported to have died in 748/1347, therefore he would have been born in 598/1201 and it is possible he could have visited the Caliph al-Musta'sim.

At his visit to the Shah, Ibn Battuta found him indulging in very austere forms of self denial. He would fast for ten days at a time and was as thin as a stick. His fellow dervishes consumed the gifts given to him by devotees, while the Shah lived only on milk from his cow. The *khanqah* itself was situated near a cave. Ibn Battuta was highly impressed with Shah Jalal's intuitive and miraculous powers for which, the author writes, he was known from the Eastern Islamic world to China. Shaikh Burhanu'd-Din Sagharji of China, informed Ibn Battuta that Shah Jalal controlled everything that happened in the world.[2] Even though Shah Jalal did not leave Bengal after he had returned there finally, it is believed he miraculously performed his morning prayers in Mecca whither he also made an annual pilgrimage.

Naturally with such claims made for him the Shah's personality became tremendously popular with the local Hindus and Buddhists amongst whom he had settled. The magic surrounding his name prompted many to embrace Islam.

[1] *Gulzar-i Abrar*, ff. 75a-b.
[2] *Voyages*, IV, pp. 126-27.

Some popular saints

The enterprising selection by Shah Jalal of Sylhet for his spiritual activities is matched by the similar choice of Chittagong in East Bengal by Shaikh Badru'd-Din or Pir Badr-i 'Alam. Like Shah Jalal, the Shaikh was a historical character around whom so many legends had been woven that the facts seem few and the myths many. His ancestors had settled in Meerut; his grandfather, Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Haqq Go[1] (Speaker of the Truth) was executed by Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq for accusing the latter of cruelty. Shaikh Badr was initiated into the secrets of mysticism by his father and by Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din Bukhari. At the invitation of Shaikh Sharfu'd-Din Yahya Munyari he moved to Bihar, but by the time he had reached the province the great Shaikh had already died. He married into a Bihari Hindu family and set off for Sunargaon and Chittagong in East Bengal. Chittagong was believed to be haunted by evil spirits so the Shaikh's decision to live there at the time was considered somewhat bold and sensational. The traditional site of his *chilla* (cell) where he would perform ascetic exercises often for forty days is still a centre of pilgrimage.

About the middle of the fourteenth century, Chittagong was conquered by Fakhru'd-Din Mubarak Shah (1338–50). Later it was to change hands many times between the kings of Arakan, Tripura and Bengal. According to the seventeenth century historian, Shihabu'd-Din Talish, Chatagoan or Chittagong was a stretch of land adjacent to Bengal and Arakan. From Jagdia to Chittagong was a wilderness. On the edge of the hill was a dense jungle, without any vestige of habitation or life. The river Feni, rising in the hills of Tipperah passed by Jagdia and fell into the Bay of Bengal. Ninety-nine creeks which contained water in all seasons were dotted between the Feni and Chittagong.

Pir Badr-i 'Alam's stay in this wilderness greatly impressed the predominantly Buddhist and animistic Hindus of Chittagong and Arakan. His lasting impact has been as the patron saint of sailors, both Muslim and Hindu. The legend that Pir Badr arrived in Chittagong on a floating piece of rock or that he travelled to Arakan on the back of a fish symbolize his powers over rivers. Even now local boatmen invoke his spirit before embarking on a journey with this chant:

'Amara achchi polapan
Gazi achche nigahman,
Shire Ganga dariya Panch Pir,
Badr, Badr, Badr'
'We are children and the Ghazi is our protector,
the river Ganges is over us.
Oh Panch Pir (Oh, the five saints), Oh Badr, Badr'.

[1] *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, f. 535a; *AA*, pp. 131.

Another invocation is as follows:

'Darya ke panch paise, Badr, Badr'
'Five copper pieces for the river, Oh Badr'.

Finally Pir Badr left East Bengal for Bihar, where he settled and established amicable relations with the Sharqi dynasty of Jaunpur. He died on 27 Rajab 844/22 December 1440. As distinguished, though not as large as the *Bari Dargah* (Bigger Mausoleum) of Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din Yahya Munyari, Pir Badr's tomb in Bihar is known as the *Choti Dargah* (Smaller Mausoleum). Symbolic tombs of Pir Badr were built, generally facing river mouths,[1] at Chittagong, Arakan and elsewhere in East Bengal. A memorial (*astana*)[2] was built on the top of a hill in Chittagong and according to Talish was cared for by attendants who spent most of their time in prayer and fasting. The Buddhist and Hindu Magh people settled some villages as endowment for the shrine and made it a centre of pilgrimage.[3]

Retaining his superiority as a magical figure over rivers and as the patron saint of sailors and mariners, in East Bengal Pir Badr is associated with the great mythical figure of Khwaja Khizr to whom we earlier referred.[4] Khwaja Khizr was believed to travel by fish, a counterpart of the fish incarnation of Vishnu. Pir Badr was also believed to use this form of transport as well as rocks. Both were worshipped in a joint ceremony held on a village pond or nearby river in which a little grass raft carrying a lighted lamp was floated.

Some Bengali traditions assign Pir Badr the fifth position in the group of legendary Panch Pir or five *pirs*. The four others were Ghazi Miyan (Salar Mas'ud), Zinda Ghazi, Shaikh Farid, and Khwaja Khizr, and all were worshipped by both Hindus and Muslims. There are several collective mausoleums of the Panch Pir, one of the most famous being in

[1]The Firuzshahi inscription in the Chota Dargah, *JASB*, 42, 1873, pp. 302-03; St. Andrew St. John, R.F., *A Burmese saint*, *JRAS*, 1894, pp. 566-67; Forlong, J.G.R., *Letters on "Bud, Bad-a-r and Madra" JRAS*, 1895, pp. 203-05. Temple, R.C. *Some discursive elements on Barbosa: the Indian Antiquary*, LII, p. 132; Temple, R.C., *Buddermokan: Journal of the Burma Research Society*, 15, pt. 1, pp. 1-33; M. Sadiq Khan, Badr Maqams. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan*, VIII, no. 1, pp. 17-46.

[2]Literally a tomb; Bengalis believed that the saint was buried there.

[3]On the basis of his modern informants, Ignaz Goldziher makes the following interesting observation on relic worship in India: '... the mischief done with relics (had) blossomed especially in India and here the change from the veneration of relics as a manifestation of piety into a real cult of them is most marked. This is due to the peculiar character of Indian Islam. Here Islam is forced to compete with the native veneration of the relics and could not avoid adopting some of the indigenous concepts in this field also. Typical of the nature of this process is the fact that Buddhist relics could simply be changed into those of 'Ali. In India veneration of relics of all sorts, as for example of the footprints of the Prophet, etc., found its way into the public cult of the mosque. One of the richest treasuries of such precious objects is the Padishahi mosque at Lahore.' Ignaz Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, ed. S.M. Stern, trans. C.R. Barber and S.M. Stern, II, London, 1971, pp. 331-32.

[4]*See* Chapter One, pp. 98-9, *supra*.

Sunargoan. It may be noted that Hindus and Muslims alike attach some importance in religious usage to the number five; the Panch Pir are the counterparts of the Panch Tathagatas of the Buddhists and the Panch Pandits of the Nath yogis.

Pir Badr is also associated with Shah Madar. The latter similarly was an historical figure around whom many legendary feats were evolved. Shah Madar's name was Shaikh Badi'u'd-Din. The earliest mention of Shah Madar is made in the *Lataif-i Ashrafi* but Shaikh 'Abdu'l Haqq also mentions him briefly. His complete biography, the *Mir'at-i Madari*, was written by Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman Chishti. Written in 1064/1654, it was based on a work entitled the *Iman-i Mahmudi* by Shah Madar's *khalifa*, Qazi Mahmud Kinturi, and on the *Lata'if-i Ashrafi*. The Shaikh wrote the work near Shah Madar's shrine at Makanpur in Kanpur, and as with his other work, the *Mirat-i Mas'udi*, the author asserted he was helped in its compilation by the holy spirit of the great saint.

Shah Madar's ancestors and father, Abu Ishaq Shami were Jews from Aleppo, the Shah's birthplace in 715/1315, where he received the traditional education of a young Jew. After his parent's death, however, he travelled to Mecca and Medina. In Mecca, Shah Madar met Saiyid Muhammad Ashraf Jahangir Simnani. At Medina, Shah Madar embraced Islam. From Medina he went to Hurmuz and finally headed for India. Although shipwrecked he managed to reach Gujarat. From there he went to Ajmer where he visited the tomb of Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Chishti. Leaving Ajmer, Shah Madar went to Kalpi where his bouts of ecstasy aroused considerable popular interest. At that time Qadir Shah, (1410–35), the son of Sultan Muhammad and a descendant of Sultan Firuz Shah was Kalpi's ruler. He called on the Shah but was not allowed to meet him, being told that the saint was engaged in private conversation with a dervish. Later Qadir Shah was informed that Shah Madar was with a yogi and therefore did not wish to meet the Sultan. This so annoyed the latter that he ordered Shah Madar's servants to ask his master to leave Kalpi. Thereupon the Shah cursed the Sultan and his body was covered with blisters. The Sultan sought the protection of Shaikh Siraj Sukhta, a disciple of the Makhdum Jahaniyan, who gave him his shirt to wear. The holy shirt cured the Sultan and Shah Madar was so disappointed that he left for Jaunpur.

There he came into conflict with Qazi Shihabu'd-Din. Sultan Ibrahim Shah Sharqi intervened, however, and Shah Madar later settled at Makanpur. Once again, at Sultan Ibrahim's request, he visited Jaunpur, but the principal centre of his activity remained in Makanpur. He is said to have remarked that he spent thirty-five years of his life in Syria, forty in Mecca, Medina and Najaf, and fifty in India. According to Shaikh 'Abdu'l Haqq, Shah Madar's disciples claimed he had attained the mystic stage in which he shared in the nature of God, the Creator. They also reported that he took no meals for twelve years. He remained

unpolluted according to holy law and hence was not required to take a ceremonial bath or change his clothes. Mostly he kept his face veiled. Anyone who glanced at him would instantly fall to the ground.[1] Shah Madar's followers asserted that their *pir* had obtained spiritual training directly from Muhammad; others added five or six names in an ascending order of spiritual ancestors,[2] in order to connect him with the Prophet.

By the time of the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan (1628–1658) Shah Madar's image had developed in quite a different way. Like many Hindu mendicants his followers, the Madaris, wore no garments and smeared their bodies with ashes. The most perfect among them went naked even in the severest winters of Kashmir and Kabul. However they sat before fires to keep warm. Their hair was tangled, and they wound iron chains around their heads and necks. Often to distinguish themselves from other mendicants, they wore black turbans and carried black flags. They refused to observe traditional prayers and fasting and ate a large amount of hemp leaves, proudly relating stories of their excessive consumption of this intoxicating drug. The Madaris would sit and tell each other fantastic stories involving the extensive claims of their order. One such tale asserted that after Muhammad reached divine proximity in the *Mi'raj*, he was permitted to wander through paradise. He reached the gates only to find them narrower than the eye of a needle. He asked the Archangel Gabriel how he could enter, the angel replied he should cry *Dam Madar* (Madar is Life) and after doing so, Muhammad entered paradise.[3] *Dam Madar*, the slogan of the Madaris, also meant 'Madar is Spirit' and 'Do not Breathe.'

A branch of the Madaris were known to *Be Qaid wa Be Nawa* (Without Ties and Material Concern). They accepted nothing beyond a tiny quantity of food and drink and made their *khirqas* from shreds which they collected from the streets. Whenever they wanted a gift they reviled the reluctant donor until their demands were fulfilled. According to them God was Spirit, Muhammad His body, the Four Caliphs His two arms and feet; To them *Dam Madar* meant that everything depended on *dam* and *nafs* and both words can be translated as 'breath.'[4]

Shah Madar's tomb in Makanpur in Kanpur attracted hordes of people. On 14 Rabi' II, 1069/9 January 1659 while marching against his rival Prince Shuja', the puritanically orthodox Aurangzeb yet saw fit to visit the tomb.[5] Every year on the occasion of the Shah's *'urs* large crowds of Hindus and Muslims assemble, although women are still not permitted near the shrine. The Madari dervishes, crying 'Dam Madar', walk on

[1] *AA*, p. 164.
[2] *Mir'atu'l-Asrar*, ff. 450b-83b; *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, f. 50b; *Qasr-i 'Arifan*, Oriental College, Magazine, May 1965, pp. 152-78.
[3] *Dabistan-i Mazahib*, p. 214.
[4] ibid, p. 216.
[5] Muhammad Kazim, *Alamgir-Nama*, Calcutta, 1868, p. 241.

burning coals while their feet remain unscathed. Shah Madar is the patron saint of both Hindu and Muslim jugglers, acrobats and those who earn their livelihood by exhibiting tricks with monkeys and bears.

The custom and ideas of the Qalandariyya and the Nath yogis also had considerable impact on the beliefs of a section of the followers of Makhdum Jahaniyan Saiyid Jalal Bukhari. Unlike other sufis they adopted Shi'ism and in the same manner as the Madaris went naked and to warm themselves sat before fires. Although their hair was unmatted, they shaved their heads, beards, moustaches and eyebrows and spent their time wandering from place to place. When they came into the order they offered all their material goods to their preceptors, and in return were given a cap and the spiritual tree of the order which was worn on their heads or hung round their necks. Jalali saints who had achieved a certain standard of perfection like the Haidaris would swallow snakes saying they were 'Ali's fish and scorpions were called 'Ali's prawns.[1]

A most interesting legendary figure was Shaikh Baba Ratan or Hajji Baba Ratan who is said to have hailed from Tabarhinda or Bhatinda in the Panjab. He was known by his *kunniya* or patronymic Abu'l-Riza. Born before the birth of Muhammad, he often prayed for the appearance of a great leader. After some time he heard of the Prophet Muhammad and the new religion he had begun. Again he visited Mecca and Medina where he became a Muslim and a companion of the Prophet. Muhammad personally related *Ahadis* to Baba Ratan and subsequently a treatise entitled *Risala-i Rataniyya* was composed in which these traditions were recorded. He returned to the Punjab and died in 700/1300 where he was buried. However the *Ahadis* attributed to Baba Ratan were considered by Saghani as apocryphal.[2]

Sufis and scholars who flourished between the thirteenth and the sixteenth centuries were unconcerned with scholarly criticism and the Kubrawiyya order incorporated writings attributed to Baba Ratan into its own traditions. A sufi who was reported as having visited Baba Ratan was Shaikh Raziu'd-Din 'Ali Lala of Ghazna. He was one of the disciples of Shaikh Najmu'd-Din Kubra and a seasoned traveller. Before his death on 3 Rabi' I 642/9 August 1244, he visited India and met Baba Ratan who handed him the comb which the Prophet had given him in order to pass on to Shaikh Raziu'd-Din 'Ali Lala.[3] The legend was confirmed by the pious and more critical Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din 'Ala'u'd-Dawla Simnani. This was the saintly seal finally affixed to the *Ahadis* attributed to Baba Ratan. It became a part of the Kubrawiyya tradition and was later stated as authentic by Mir Saiyid 'Ali Hamadani. Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani (773/1372–852/1449) the great Egyptian scholar of *Hadis*, gave an account of Baba Ratan in his large biographical dictionary

[1] *Dabistan-i Mazahib*, p. 215.
[2] M. Ishaq, *India's contribution to the study of Hadith literature*, Dacca, 1955, p. 227.
[3] *NU*, pp. 435-37.

al-Isaba fi Tamyiz al-Sahaba and many later sufi biographical works also refer to Baba Ratan.[1]

According to the legend, another less prominent Indian companion of the Prophet Muhammad, was the Gujarati, 'Abdu'llah Chingal. He travelled to Mecca, observed Muhammad's miracle of the splitting of the moon, and embraced Islam. He also was reported to have survived for several centuries before he died in Gujarat.

However incredible these legends may appear, they formed an integral part of popular sufi beliefs, not only in India but throughout the Islamic world. They were mainly designed to glorify Islam and to strengthen beliefs in the supernatural and in the performance of miracles.

[1] *Gulzar-i Abrar*, ff. 13b-17b; *A'in*, III, p. 168.

Chapter Six

The Interaction between Medieval Hindu Mystic Traditions and Sufism

THE study of the interaction between medieval Hindu mystic traditions and sufism has been marred by deep prejudices and studded with conflicting hypotheses. The subject can best be studied by dividing it into two epochs: firstly, the pre-eleventh century and secondly, the eleventh to the sixteenth centuries.

The fact that mystic urges are now recognized as inherent in all religious systems tends to dampen such theories as those expressed by early Western orientalists that sufism developed from an Aryan (implying here, Iranian) reaction against the conquering Semitic Arabs.[1] However, as shown in the first chapter, the presence of Nestorian, Buddhist, Manichaean and Sanskrit scholars in the remote regions of Khurasan and Central Asia between the eighth and the tenth centuries cannot be denied. There are variations in the circumstances of the worldly renunciations of both Siddhartha Gautama (the Buddha) and Ibrahim bin Adham, and the Buddhist analogy has aroused considerable controversy. Although there is no evidence that Ibrahim bin Adham had the example of Siddhartha Gautama in mind when he renounced his throne, the controversy is interesting.

Much dispute also surrounds the concepts of *fana'* and *baqa'* as expressed by Bayazid Bastami. Comparing *fana'* with *nirvana*, Nicholson says:

> 'Both terms imply the passing away of individuality, but while *nirvana* is purely negative, *fana'* is accompanied by *baqa'*, everlasting life in God. The rapture of the sufi who has lost himself in ecstatic contemplation of divine beauty is entirely opposed to the passionless serenity of the *Arahat*.'[2]

This theory which has great appeal to many Muslim scholars[3] is ques-

[1] F.A.C. Tholuck, *Sufismus*, Berolini, 1821; A. von Kremer, *Culturgeschichtliche Streifzuge auf dem Gebiete des Islam*, Leipzig, 1873, pp. 45-55; *Literary history of Persia*, I, first published, London, 1902, pp. 419-20; L. Massignon, *Essai sur les origines du lexique technique de la mystique Musulmane*, Paris, 1922, p. 46; Max Horton, *Indische Stromungen in der islamischen mystik*, I, Heidelberg, 1927, pp. 17-25; Max Horton, *Philosophische systeme*, Bonn, 1912, pp. 177, 274.

[2] Nicholson, *The mystics of Islam*, p. 16.

[3] Aziz Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic culture in the Indian environment*, Oxford, 1966, pp. 124-25.

tionable in the light of modern research. *Nirvana* is not a purely negative concept but a positive one.[1] The state of *arhantship* in which *nirvana* has been achieved, cannot be described as either existence or non-existence and can be likened to the goals not only of Abu Yazid, but even of Muhasibi and Junaid.

There are no objective data available to determine the impact of Hallaj's ideas of the soul after his visit to Sind but Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Dawla Simnani had no misgivings about the influence that Hallaj's travels had on his philosophy. However Hujwiri's disappointment with certain sufis of his own time, whom he called Hululis, has already been mentioned, as has his assessment of current Brahmanical influence on sufi thought in Islam.[2]

From the eleventh century onwards in India, the contacts and conflicts between sufis and yogis became more frequent and meaningful. The various branches of qalandars and sufis of the Rifa'iyya order, confined mainly to Turkey, Syria and Egypt, were significantly influenced by wandering yogis. Unfortunately existing literature throws little light on yogis, who are constantly referred to as 'jogis'. In one reference the perfect yogi is associated by Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Chiragh-i Dihli with the *Siddhas*. The topics discussed at the *jama 'at-khana* gatherings of Baba Farid were of great interest to visiting Siddhas whose beliefs were founded on Hatha Yoga. Supplementing these scraps of information is al-Biruni, unquestionably a profound authority on comparative religions, who notes sufi parallels in the *Yoga Sutra* of Patanjali, which he himself translated into Arabic.[3] He also mentions similarities with Samkhya, one of the six schools of classical Hindu philosophy, and with the *Bhagavad Gita*. Patanjali's theories of the soul are defined by Al-Biruni as follows:

> 'The soul, being on all sides tied to ignorance, which is the cause of its being fettered, is like rice in its cover. As long as it is there, it is capable of growing and ripening in the transition stages between being born and giving birth itself. But if the cover is taken off the rice, it ceases to develop in this way, and becomes stationary. The retribution of the soul depends on the various kinds of creatures through which it wanders, upon the extent of life, whether it be long or short, and upon the particular kind of its happiness, be it scanty or ample.'[4]

He goes on to say:

[1]*See* R.C. Zaehner, *Mysticism sacred and profane*, Oxford, 1961, p. 52; Edward Conze, *Buddhism*, New York, 1959, pp. 39-40, 126-36.

[2]Nicholson, pp. 236, 243, 260-66, 271.

[3]Shlomo Pines and Tubia Gelblum, 'Al-Biruni's Arabic version of Patanjali's *Yoga-sutra*, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, XXIX, pt. 2, University of London, 1966, p. 303, *See* H. Ritter, 'Al-Biruni's Ubersetzung des yoga-Sutra des Patanjali, *Oriens*, IX, 1956, pp. 165-200.

[4]E.C. Sachau, *Alberuni's India*, I, 1964, p. 55.

> 'The same doctrine is professed by those sufis who teach that this world is a sleeping soul and yonder world a soul awake, and who at the same time admit that God is immanent in certain places—for example, in heaven—in the *seat* and the *throne* of God (mentioned in the Qur'an). But then there are others who admit that God is immanent in the whole world, in animals, trees and the inanimate world, which they call His *universal appearance*. To those who hold this view, the entering of the souls into various beings in the course of metempsychosis is of no consequence.'[1]

Referring to the Samkhya theory of the rewards of Paradise as being of no special advantage, Al-Biruni adds:

> 'The sufis, too, do not consider the stay in Paradise a special gain for another reason, because there the soul delights in other things, but the Truth, that is, God, and its thoughts are diverted from the Absolute Good by things which are not the Absolute Good.'[2]

On the nature of liberation from the world and the path by which this can be achieved, Al-Biruni quotes Patanjali's text as follows:

> 'The concentration of thought on the unity of God induces man to notice something besides that with which he is occupied. He who wants God, wants the good for the whole creation without a single exception for any reason whatever; but he who occupies himself exclusively with his own self, will for its benefit neither inhale, breathe, nor exhale it (*svasa* and *prasvasa*). When a man attains to this degree, his spiritual power prevails over his bodily power, and then he is gifted with the faculty of doing eight different things by which detachment is realised; for a man can only dispense with that which he is able to do, not with that which is outside his grasp.'[3]

According to al-Biruni the sufi parallel is contained in the following theory:

> 'The terms of the sufi as to the *knowing* being and his attaining the *stage of knowledge* come to the same effect, for they maintain that he has two souls—an eternal one, not exposed to change and alteration, by which he knows that which is hidden, the transcendental world, and performs wonders; and another, a human soul, which is liable to being changed and being born.'[4]

[1]E.C. Sachau, *Alberuni's India*, I, 1964, pp. 57-8.
[2]ibid, pp. 62-3.
[3]ibid, pp. 68-9.
[4]ibid, p. 69.

Al-Biruni also quotes this passage from the *Yoga Sutra* to indicate the relation of the body to the soul.

> 'The bodies are the snares of the souls for the purpose of acquiring recompense. He who arrives at the stage of liberation has acquired, in his actual form of existence, the recompense for all the doing of the past. Then he ceases to labour to acquire a title to a recompense in the future. He frees himself from the snare; he can dispense with the particular form of his existence, and moves in it quite freely without being ensnared by it. He has even the faculty of moving wherever he likes, and if he likes, he might rise above the face of death. For the thick, cohesive bodies cannot oppose an obstacle to his *form* of existence (as, for example, a mountain could not prevent him from passing through). How, then, could his body oppose an obstacle to his soul?'[1]

The similarities in the sufi approach is demonstrated by this story:

> 'A company of sufis came down (to) us, and sat at some distance from us. Then one of them rose, prayed, and on having finished his prayer, turned towards me and spoke: "Oh master, do you know here a place fit for us *to die* on?" Now I thought he meant *sleeping*, and so I pointed out to him a place. The man went there, threw himself on the back of his head, and remained motionless. Now I rose, went to him and shook him, but lo! he was already cold.'[2]

Again the likenesses between Patanjali's views and those of sufism concerning meditation of the Truth (that is, God) is reflected in the following sufi theory:

> '. . . they (sufis) say: "As long as you point to something you are not a monist;[3] but when *the Truth* seizes upon the object of your pointing and annihilates it, then there is no longer an indicating person nor an object indicated."
>
> There are some passages in their system which show that they believe in the pantheistic union;[4] for example, one of them, being asked what is *the Truth* (God), gave the following answer: "How should I not know the Being which is I in essence and *Not-I* in space? If I return once more into existence, thereby I am separated from Him; and if I am neglected (that is, not born anew and sent into the

[1] E.C. Sachau, *Alberuni's India*, I, 1964, pp. 82-3.

[2] ibid, p. 83.

[3] The original word is *muwahhid*, meaning one who is absorbed in Divine Unity rather than monism.

[4] *Ittihad* in original.

world), thereby I become light and become accustomed to the *union*, (*sic*)."

Abu-Bakr Ash-Shibli says: "Cast off all, and you will attain to us completely. Then you will exist; but you will not report about us to others as long as your doing is like ours."

Abu-Yazid Albistami once being asked how he had attained *his* stage in sufism, answered: "I cast off my own self as a serpent casts off its skin. Then I considered my own self, and found that I was He," *that is*, God.

The sufis explain the Qur'anic passage "*Then we spoke: Beat Him with a part of her*,"[1] in the following manner: "The order to kill that which is dead in order to give life to it indicates that the heart does not become alive by the lights of knowledge unless the body be killed by ascetic practice to such a degree that it does not any more exist as a reality, but only in a formal way, whilst your heart is a reality on which no object of the formal world has any influence."

Further they say: "Between man and God there are a thousand stages of light and darkness. Men exert themselves to pass through darkness to light and when they have attained to the stations of light, there is no return for them."'[2]

Regarding the sufi doctrine of love as being a total obsession with God, al-Biruni quotes interesting parallels from the *Bhagavad Gita*.[3] The encounter of Shaikh Safiu'd-Din Kaziruni with a yogi, also described earlier, demonstrates the type of contacts early sufis had with yogis.

From the thirteenth century onwards Hindu mystical songs were recited at *sama'* gatherings and many of the most talented musicians were newly converted Muslims. Shaikh Ahmad from Naharwala in Gujarat, who gave expert renditions of Hindawi[4] *ragas*, lived during this century. The Shaikh undoubtedly attended the most significant *sama'* performances, as is clear from his presence when a Persian verse produced such powerful ecstasy in Shaikh Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki that he died a few days later. Ahmad was said to have been a disciple of Faqir Madhu, the Imam of the Jami' mosque in Ajmer, who retained his Hindu name even after conversion.[5]

The recitation of Hindawi music at *sama'* was popular at all sufi centres, particularly those some distance from Delhi. Saiyid Gisu Daraz admitted that each language was endowed with a characteristic of its own and to him none was as effective as Hindawi for through it esoteric ideas could

[1] *Qur'an*, II, 73. The meaning is controversial, some commentators consider it refers to the martyrdom of Jesus Christ.

[2] *Alberuni's India*, I, p. 87; *Fi Tahqiq Ma Li'l Hind*, Hyderabad, 1958, p. 66.

[3] *Alberuni's India*, I, p. 76.

[4] Hindawi is a generic term referring to indigenous dialects in northern India.

[5] *Fawidu'l-Fu'ad*, pp. 186-87.

be so clearly expressed. Hindawi music, the Saiyid believed, was also subtle and elegant, penetrating deeply into the heart and arousing humility and gentleness. When hearing it people became more aware of their faults and therefore, it was natural, to the Saiyid that Hindawi music was becoming increasingly popular.[1]

Most of the Hindawi songs recited at *sama'* gatherings held during this period have been lost, but a few verses that have survived have been ascribed to Shaikh Hamidu'd-Din Nagauri and Baba Farid. What is significant, however, is the spontaneous expression of subtle mystical beliefs through verses in regional dialects. Such songs were not composed for propaganda purposes but were a natural evolution from the deep and personal involvement of these two great mystics with their environment. Hindawi was a more convenient language in which to utter the feelings of a heart filled with divine love. In a Persian work, the *Sururu's-Sudur*, Shaikh Hamid quotes a touching verse emphasizing the fact that differences in nomenclature failed to undermine the truth that Reality is One.[2] An object could assume hundreds of different forms and be known by the same number of names but this did not alter the fact that they all emanated from One. Although earlier sufis had expressed this idea in many different ways in both Persian poetry and prose, the later use of Hindawi in further explanations of this concept was most probably a significant factor in the arousal of Hindu interest in sufism.

In another verse on the misuse of drugs and medicinal herbs, Shaikh Hamid attacks the yogi emphasis on the use of drugs and medicinal herbs, without denying their efficacy in certain circumstances. A sick man could go to China, the original source of Hindu theories on alchemy, and not being cured attribute the failure to the lack of effectiveness of *rasayana* (the compounding of the *elixir vitae*) but, argued the Shaikh, a real understanding of the illness involved a belief that human effort operated only within a very limited sphere.[3]

In Persian and Hindawi verses Shaikh Hamidu'd-Din emphasized that drugs were not necessarily evil, only the people who misused them were In a Hindawi verse the Shaikh wrote that for all the claims to cure diseases it was impossible to transform a sick person into a yogi.[4]

[1] *Jawami'u'l-Kilam*, pp. 172-73.

[2] *Sururu's-Sudur*, p. 69.

जो बिस्तरै तो सबै, सिकत (जो) संकोय ।
सौ सौ एक पुरुष के नाँव बिरला जानै कोय ॥

[3] ibid, p. 74.

बिरले चीन जो रोगिन गई जौगिनकरी गुन गई को दोस ।
अयन रसायन संचरै रंग जो मारै ओस ॥

[4] ibid, p. 302

औपदि भेजन धनि गई, ओउ भई बिरहीन ।
औषधि दोष न जानई, नारि न चेतै तीन ॥

Although the famous poet of the romantic epic, Iliyas bin Yusuf Nizami of Ganja, in Azerbayjan, died on 4 Ramazan 605/12 March 1209, his *ghazals* and *masnawis* quickly reached India and aroused the interest of those Indians who had a knowledge of Persian. Shaikh Hamidu'd-Din Nagauri made a free Hindi translation of one of Nizami's *ghazals* and included in the text both the Persian original and their equivalent Hindawi *dohas*.[1]

The *Siyaru'l-Auliya'* quotes a verse composed by Baba Farid in the Multani dialect whose precise meaning is difficult to decipher.[2] The *Saba'-Sanabil* of Mir 'Abdu'l-Wahid Bilgarami contains two *dohas* by Baba Farid with a Persian translation. The Mir himself was a good poet in Hindawi and his version makes the *doha* more intelligible. Here are two verses of the Baba's translated from the Hindawi.

> 'You are yourself ignorant but you seek to make others your disciple,
> You give a cap as a mark of initiation, and this indicates that you are presumptuous.
> A mouse who is unable to enter into a narrow hole,
> Puts a heavy load over his head, although he moves in a narrow place!'

The other *doha* says:

> 'You shave your head but what you should do is to cut lust from the heart,
> By shaving the head, the path of faith is not acquired.
> Several thousand sheep whose wool are cut, move about in different directions,
> None of these is accepted in the court of the Master.'

Controversy surrounds more than a hundred *slokas*[3] ascribed to Baba Farid Ganj-i Shakar in the *Guru Garanth*, compiled by the fifth Sikh Guru, Arjan, in 1604. Some scholars assert they were composed by Baba Farid himself but the language indicates they were the work of his suc-

[1] दरजान जनीम आतश अफ्यारह चुनीं खुस्तर ।
यादे न दही अज मा ग़मख्वारह चुनीं खुस्तर ॥

दोहरा

हिरा आध करि छाड़ गो यह बहु भेला (?) होय ।
पिउ निस्तारै गेंव तिहि अम निस्तारै कोय ॥

[2] *Sururu's-Sudur*, pp. 50-1; *SA*, p. 367.

[3] Mir 'Abdu'l-Wahid Bilgarami, *Saba' Sanabil*, Kanpur, 1299/1881-82, p. 58; Mohan Singh Diwana, 'Baba Farid Ganj Shakar, Shaikh Ibrahim Aur Farid Sani', Oriental College Magazine, Lahore, February, 1938, May, 1938 and February, 1939.

cessors who may have rewritten some of Baba Farid's original *slokas* into a more intelligible Multani. Some of these *slokas* are even ascribed to Kabir. The *Janam Sakhis* includes a number of *slokas* which Guru Nanak and his successors composed to support, rather than dispute, the ideas contained in Baba Farid's *slokas*. Others believe that the *slokas* in the *Guru Garanth* were composed by Shaikh Ibrahim, a successor of Baba Farid, whom Guru Nanak visited at Ajodhan. A careful analysis of Baba Farid's *slokas* in the *Guru Granth* would tend to suggest they were not composed by one individual. Therefore it is wrong to ascribe them either to Shaikh Ibrahim or another of Baba Farid's descendants, known as Farid Sani. They represent the teachings of Baba Farid through the years from his own time to the fifteenth century and were therefore composed by a number of different descendants, all using Farid as their *nom de plume*.

The period in which the poetry of Shaikh Hamidu'd-Din Nagauri and Baba Farid was written was preceded by one in which two significant poetic traditions were established in north Indian dialects. Firstly there was the poetry of the Siddhacharyas, followers of the Buddhist Sahajiya cult which began during the eighth century. This literature continued to influence, in both style and spirit, the poetry written in local dialects until the twelfth century. Secondly this type of poetry was succeeded by that written by members of the Nath cult.

Sahajiya Buddhism was an offshoot of Tantric Buddhism, the Vajrayana or 'Vehicle of the Thunderbolt', which was patronised by the Pala kings of Bengal. In northern India Vajrayana, the third vehicle, superceded Mahayana Buddhism, the second. It featured the worship of feminine deities and magico-religious practices by which superhuman powers and salvation could be attained.

The supreme deity of the Vajrayana is the *Vajra-Sattva* (*vajra-sunyata*: vacuity; *sattva*: quintessence), who is the nature of pure consciousness (the *vijnapti-matrata* of the Vijnana Vadin Buddhists) as associated with *sunyata*[1] in the form of the absence of subjectivity and objectivity. The *Vajra-Sattva* is often identified with man's self and with the Ultimate Reality in the form of the Bodhi-citta. The latter: 'presupposes two elements in the citta, *sunyata* (the knowledge of the nature of things as pure void) and *karuna* (universal compassion).'[2] This is conceived as an extremely blissful state of mind produced through sexo-yogic practices. The Sahajiyas differed from the Vajrayanists because of the emphasis they laid on protesting against the formalities of life and religion. Accord-

[1]*Sunya* (void) is not simply 'non-being' but has an affinity with the Brahman (World Spirit) of the Vedanta. It is formed of an impenetrable essence and is therefore called *vajra* (diamond). '*Sunyata*, which is firm, substantial, indivisible, impregnable fire-proof and imperishable, is also called *vajra*,' Shastri, H., ed., 'Advayavajra-Samgraha' quoted in Mircea Eliade, *Yoga*, translated from the French by W.R. Trask, New York, 1958, p. 206.

[2]S. Dasgupta, *Obscure religious cults*, Calcutta, 1962, p. 27.

ing to them truth was to be unconventionally understood through initiation in the *tattva* (secret truth) and the physical practice of Yoga. The Sahajiya recommended the transformation and sublimation of sexual impulse, rather than its annihilation. The *dohas* by Tillo-Pada and Saraha-Pada, who flourished between the eighth and ninth centuries AD emphasized that Truth could be realized only through the individual. According to Saraha-Pada, the Brahmanical claims of class superiority were unfounded, the naked Jaina Ksapanaka-Yogins were frauds, the Buddhist monks were superstitious, the *Tantras*[1] and the *Mantras*[2] led to confusion and only Sahaja helped a mystic to gain a true understanding of the real nature of yogic discipline. Brahmanical sacrifices,[3] pilgrimages and penances were of no avail, what had to be done was to fix the mind to the *Niranjana* or Stainless One. The *Hevajra-tantra* says:

> 'The whole world is of the nature of Sahaja—
> for Sahaja is the quintessence (*svarupa*) of all;
> this quintessence is *nirvana* to those who
> possess the perfectly pure Citta.'[4]

A Sahajiya poet compared the Sahaja stage to the flowing of nectar; according to Tillo-Pada: 'Sahaja is a state where all thought—concentration is dead (that is, destroyed) and the vital wind (which is the vehicle of the defiled Citta) is also destroyed—the secret of this truth is to be intended by the self—how can it be explained (by others)?' Saraha-Pada continues by saying:

> 'In Sahaja there is no duality; it is perfect like the sky. The intuition of this ultimate truth destroys all attachment and it shines through the darkness of attachment like a full moon in the night. Sahaja cannot be heard with the ears, neither can it be seen with the eyes; it is not affected by air nor burnt by fire; it is not wet in intense rain, it neither increases nor decreases, it neither exists nor does it die out with the decay of the body; the Sahaja bliss is only oneness of emotions,—it is oneness in all. Our mind and the vital wind are unsteady like the horse;—but in the Sahaja-nature both of them remain steady. When the mind thus ceases to function and all other ties are torn aside, all the differences in the nature of things vanish; and at that time there is neither the Brahman nor the Sudra. Sahaja cannot be realized in

[1]Tantricism is the cult followed by certain left-handed sects of Hindus and Buddhists. Although not hostile to the Vedas, Tantricists do not approve of the conventional schools of Hindu philosophy. Tantric doctrines are opposed to caste and class distinctions.

[2]These form the main body of the Vedic *samhita* or 'collections' and are an integral part of Hindu esoteric studies. They are composed of the names of deities, which are arbitrarily classified as male and female. The most powerful of all *mantras* is the syllable *Om*.

[3]*Obscure religious cults*, pp. 54-5.

[4]ibid, p. 78.

> any of its particular aspects—it is an intuition of the whole, the one underlying reality pervading and permeating all diversity. As the truth of the lotus can never be found either in the stalk or in the leaves, or in the petals or in the smell of the lotus, or in the filament,—it lies rather in the totality of all these parts,—so also Sahaja is the totality which can only be realized in a perfectly nōn-dual state of mind. From it originate all, in it all merge again,—but it itself is free from all existence and non-existence,—it never originates at all.'[1]

The first step in achieving the Supreme Bliss of the Sahajiya was the selection of an appropriate teacher. Sahajiya esoteric practices depended on the conception that the human body was a microcosm of the macrocosm. The psycho-physical process of yoga should be undertaken only by a mature body. The yogini or the Sahaja-damsel of the Sahajiyas was not a woman of normal existence but an internal force of the nature of vacuity (*sunyata*) or essencelessness (*nairatma*) and great bliss residing in the different plexuses in different stages of yogic practices.[2]

Founded on the psycho-chemical process of yoga in which the old Siddha cult of the yogis specialized, the Shaivite Nath cult developed, assimilating elements from the Buddhist Sahajiya cult. The Adi Nath, the First Lord of the Naths, is the Shiva of the Hindus as is the Buddha, in the form of the *Vajra-Sattava*, of the Buddhists. The first human *guru* of the cult was Matsyendra, reported to have lived in the tenth century AD. According to legend, while swimming like a fish he overheard the esoteric doctrines of the Nath which the Lord Shiva was imparting to his spouse, Parvati. Matsyendra is therefore known by such names as Minanath or Lui-pa, meaning fish Lord in Tibetan. Matsyendra's weakness for women tended to associate him with the left-handed cults of the female deities. These centred around Lakshinkara, a legendary princess of the mythical kingdom of Indrabhuti which was successively ruled by female issue. Lakshinkara has been compared to Eleanor of Aquitain. Gorakhnath, Matsyendra's disciple, believed to have been born from the sweat of Shiva's breast, saved his master, in whose service he had earlier lost an eye. Much mystery and legend also surround Gorakhnath's personality, but we know he wrote some treatises in Sanskrit. A number of verses in Panjabi and Hindi also attributed to him were written by successive generations of disciples using the name Gorakhnath in order to establish a spiritual link with their master. A corpus of *dohas* with Farid as the *nom de plume* which were compiled by a number of descendants of the Baba show that their authors were also influenced by this trend. The same is true of the verses written by Guru Nanak's successors, which shall be discussed in subsequent pages. Gorakhnath's disciples were the authors of a number of treatises on magic, alchemy and left-handed

[1] *Obscure religious cults*, pp. 82-3.
[2] ibid, p. 99.

occultism and Hatha-Yoga. Of the Sanskrit treatises by Gorakhnath, unlike the *Hatha-Yoga*, the *Goraksha-Sataka* has survived and has been edited and translated into English.

Other names associated with the Nath cult are 'Nimnath, probably Nemi, the twenty-second Jain *tirthankara*; Parasnath, probably Parsava, the twenty-third Jain *tirthankara*; Bhutanath, 'Ghost Lord,' probably the Buddha; Dayanath, 'Compassionate Lord,' probably a form of a *Bodhi-citta*, Nagarjunanath, the Buddhist philosopher Nagarjuna (*c*. AD 100–200); Bharatinath, noted for his asceticism; Ratannath, a contemporary of Gorakhnath, and the subject of many miraculous tales; Dandanath, founder of a cult of staff-bearing yogis; Puranbhagat who, with his half-brother Rasula, has inspired hundreds of miraculous tales; Charpati (or Charpatinath), a *rasavada* or alchemist and poet, some of whose verses in Panjabi are extant; Guga (or Guganath) whose power over serpents was phenomenal; Manikchandra, a *bania* by caste, who left his wealth to join the Naths; Gahininath, initiated by Gorakhnath, himself initiated Nivrittinath, brother of the Maratha saint Jananadeva at Tryambaka; Dharamnath, probably the Lord Dharma of the crypto-Buddhist Dharma cult of Bengal; Jalandhari-pa; Kanu-pa; Mainamati and Gopi-Chand.

The framework of the order of the Kanphata (Split Ear Yogis) or the Naths founded by Gorakhnath serves to illustrate the latter's remarkable organizational capacity and foresight. At the time of initiation, the ear cartilages of a novice were as is still customary today split, and two enormous ear-rings were inserted in the holes. Ear splitting was believed necessary to open a mystical channel in order to assist the development of yogic powers. During the ceremony a knife was driven into the ground and vows recited over it by the initiate; these included a vow to protect the ears which, according to Hindu mysticism, were believed to contain a network of invisible *nadis* (ganglia) connecting them with the inner organs of perception. The rites also included the symbolic slaying of the neophyte, the washing of his entrails, and the hanging of his body on a tree.

The traditions venerate nine Naths and eighty-four Siddhas but this does not imply the historical authenticity of these figures. The eighty-four Siddhas represent the 'totality of a revelation.' The transmission of the Nath doctrine however is founded on the trinity: Shiva, Matsyendranath and Gorakhnath. The Naths initiated members of all castes, including those outside the Hindu caste system, such as Chandalas and sweepers, into their non-hierarchical order. Generally it would seem the Brahman castes were not attracted to the Naths. The Shaivite ascetics who haunted cemeteries, ate from skulls and even consumed corpses at the burning *ghats*, known as Aghoris or Aghora-panthis and the ascetic order of Kapalikas (wearers of skulls) are also known as yogis but are basically different to the Naths.

From the eleventh century the Nath yogis began to spread throughout

northern India, and from their centre at Peshawar moved to all parts of Central Asia and Iran, at the same time influencing both qalandars and sufis. Aghoris and Kapalikas were uninterested in Middle Eastern regions where there were no burning *ghats*. Some of the yogis who thronged the court of the Mongols were Buddhist Tantrics, but they were hardly distinguishable from the yogis. Many Naths might have indulged in homosexuality, orgiastic practices, necrophilia, scatology, bestiality and other sexual perversions, but there were many groups of sober Naths who disseminated the real spiritual tenets of their founders. All Naths however were hostile to Hindu caste distinctions, particularly those practised by Brahmans and respected even the pariah and the untouchable.

The Siddha Siddhanta Paddhati, and some authentic works by Gorakhnath's followers formed the basis of the doctrines of the puritanical Naths and offered a common ground for the exchange of ideas with such sufis as Shaikh Hamidu'd-Din Nagauri and Baba Farid. Discussions on the conception of the Ultimate Reality enhanced the mutual respect of the Naths and the sufis.

According to Gorakhnath, Ultimate Reality could not be conceived by logical reasoning; it was a super sensuous, super intellectual, direct experience in the state of *samadhi* (trance) or a perfectly illuminated state of consciousness. Those who attained the direct transcendental experience of Reality during *samadhi*, felt united with the Absolute Truth:

> '...Absolute Reality unveils Itself to our consciousness in its super-sensuous super-mental super-intellectual transcendent state, in which the subject-object relation vanishes and the consciousness realises itself as perfectly identified with the Absolute Reality. The Absolute Reality is thus experienced as the Absolute Consciousness, in which all time and space and all existences in time and space are merged in perfect unity, and the One Infinite Eternal Undifferentiated Changeless Self-Effulgent Consciousness shines as the Ultimate Reality.'[1]

Sat-Cit-Ananda-Murti (One who reveals Himself as Being, Consciousness and Bliss), Goraknath believed was the highest form of God, the self-manifestation of the Formless and Manifestationless One—Brahma, Shiva, Parmatma, Parmeswara, the holiest names of the Nameless One.

To Gorakhnath and the Siddhas the phenomenal cosmic system was not false or illusory, nor did it have merely subjective Reality. Pure Will (*Icha-matra*) inherent in the perfect transcendental nature of the Supreme Spirit was the source of the entire spatio-temporal order and of many different kinds of empirical realities. The *Siddha Siddhanta Paddhati* demonstrated the relationship between *advaita* (non-dualism) and *dvaita*

[1]A.K. Banerjea, *Philosophy of Gorakhnath*, Gorakhpur, n.d., p. 36. *See* also B. Walker, *Hindu World*, II, London, 1968, pp. 128-29.

(dualism) by using the analogy of water and bubbles familiar to that used by sufis in the *Wahdat al-Wujud* system. Bubbles appear at the surface of the water, then both bubbles and water appear merged with each other, the former loosing their ephemeral identity. The changing multiplicity of bubbles fails to separate them from the water. Thus:

> *Akulam kulam adhatte kulam cakulam icchati jala-budbuda-bat nyayat ekakarah Parah Sivah.*
>
> *Akula* embraces *Kula* (the *phenomenal self-expression* of Reality) and *Kula* yearns for *Akula* (the *noumenal essence* of Reality). The relation is analogous to that between water and water bubbles. In reality Para-Siva (Supreme Spirit) is absolutely one.'[1]

In Nath terminology the Absolute Spirit is called Shiva and His Unique Power is Shakti. There is no difference between the two, Shiva is the father of the universe and Shakti is the mother. Creation or the origin of the cosmic system is in reality the gradual revelation of Shiva's inherent Shakti; the process of creation and dissolution has no absolute beginning or end in time. The Physical Cosmic Body is the most complicated and diversified form of free self-manifestation of the Absolute Spirit through the gradual self-revelation of His infinite and eternal Spiritual Power. The human body is the microcosm of the entire cosmic body of Shiva. The divine Shakti who in the process of cosmic self-manifestation gradually descends from the highest transcendent spiritual plane of Absolute Unity and Bliss to the lowest phenomenal material level of endless diversities and imperfections, again ascends by means of the self-conscious process of *Yoga Jnana* (knowledge) and *Bhakti* (devotion) to the transcendent spiritual plane where the divine spirit becomes perfectly and blissfully united with the supreme spirit, Shiva. Man with his developed individuality can experience Shiva, the supreme spirit, as his own true soul as well as the true soul of the universe. Yogic introspection and meditation calls for the attainment of a real understanding of the nature of the human body and of its esoteric aspects. These consist of nine *cakras* or centres of psycho-vital forces. The supreme divine power, dormant like a coiled serpent is located in the lowest *muladhara cakra* of every human body; yogic discipline enables it to rise step by step to the higher planes of spiritual illumination, finding its culmination in the highest *cakra* (*sahasrara*),[2] the plane of blissful union of Shakti and Shiva. The region below the navel is the region of Shakti, while that above it is that of Shiva. *Adhars*,[3] according to Gorakhnath, are the main sources of the

[1] *Philosophy of Gorakhnath*, p. 69.

[2] According to yogic mysticism it is at the top of the head, in the form of a thousand petalled lotus *sahsra*, thousand. *Yoga*, p. 243.

[3] Supports or receptacles, situated between the *cakras* or identified with them. ibid, pp. 243-45, 410.

vital and psychical functions which have to be controlled. *Laksyas* are objects on which a yogi should temporarily concentrate while summoning his psycho-vital energy with the ultimate aim of elevating it to the highest spiritual plane which can be internal, external or non-located. The processes of *asana* (posture), *dhauti* (washing), *bandha* (different kinds of motionlessness), *mudra* (gesture), *pranayama* (breathing) and other techniques of Hatha-Yoga are prescribed so as to achieve the transformation of the body in order to achieve the full control of the mind. The prerequisite of Nath discipline is the control of the *vayu* (the vital wind). This entire philosophy is called Hatha-Yoga, the union of the moon (*tha*) and the sun (*ha*).

The perfect yogi can transform his body according to his will and is therefore free of all diseases and death. Siddhas, such as the disciples of Gorakhnath and others are believed to have achieved the practical aspects of this philosophy while in the foothills of the Himalayas and came to be known as the *jivan-mukta* (liberated while living). In fact it is the only state of true perfection in which the body is made whole throughout by control of the vital wind.

Besides poetry which offered sufis an acquaintance with various aspects of the discipline of Hatha-Yoga, the most significant impact of Hatha-Yoga was the treatise, the *Amrita-Kunda*.[1] It is believed that it was translated by Qazi Ruknu'd-Din Samarqandi who was probably Qazi Ruknu'd-Din Abu Hamid Muhammad bin Muhammad al-Amidi of Samarqand, the author of the *Kitab al-Irshad* who visited Lakhnauti between 1209–10 and 1216–17 and was initiated into Hatha-Yogic principles by a Siddha, called Bhojar Brahman. The work was later translated into Persian. A further Arabic version was again prepared by a Brahman from Kamrup, apparently in collaboration with a Muslim scholar. This version was re-translated into Persian by Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus Shattari (906/1500–01–970/1562–63). Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus Gangohi who had an extensive knowledge of the Arabic and Persian versions of the *Amrita-Kunda*, which were widespread before the translation by Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus, imparted its essence to one of his disciples, Shaikh Sulaiman.[2]

Laying special emphasis on the human body as the microcosm of the macrocosm, the *Amrita-Kunda* deals at some length with the importance of this belief. The work goes on to prescribe exercises by which one could achieve the Nath-Yogic goal of transubstantiation of the body into a state of *Samadhi*. Its main emphasis is on the discipline of the body, the senses

[1] *Catalogue Codicum Orientatium*, Or F. 113 (3) ff. 29a-47a; Bibliotheque Nationale Paris, 7732; T.W. Arnold, *A catalogue of Indian miniatures*, I and III, revised and edited by J.V.S. Wilkinson, library of A. Chester Beatty, London, 1936.

[2] Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus, *Maktubat-i Quddusiyya*, Delhi, 1871. The title of the book given by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus is *Hauzu'l-Hayat*, an exact equivalent of the *Amrita-Kunda*. Another title of the book is *Bahru'l-Hayat* (Ocean of Life or Immortality).

and the mind, and it prescribes methods for the continued suppression of respiration, which involves inhaling and exhaling the breath in a specialised manner, and fixed the eye on the tip of the nose in order to effect a union between part of the vital spirit residing in the body and that which pervades all nature. A prerequisite for yogic discipline is the control of the semen, particularly in the initial stages of ascetic exercises, and an accurate knowledge of the organs and their functions. The goal of the yogi is to transmute the physical body into a subtle body, enabling it to obtain the state of *jivan-mukti*.

The knowledge of some Indian sufis, such as Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus and his Rudauli[1] *pirs*, was not limited to understanding and practising *pranayama* or *pas-i anfas* and to some semantic similarities and dissimilarities. The Shaikh's *Rushd-Nama*[2] which consists of his own verses and some of his *pirs* identify sufi beliefs based on the *Wahdat al-Wujud* with the philosophy and practices of Gorakhnath. In fact some verses with slight variations are included in Nath poetry as well as in that of Kabir and Gorakhnath. Such verses were regarded as the common property of both Muslim and Hindu mystics. Of the many verses in the *Rushd-Nama* there are six references to either 'Gorakhnath,' 'Shri Gorakh,' 'Nath' and 'O! Nath.' As in many Nath texts, these words at five different places throughout the work imply Ultimate Reality and Absolute Truth, while in the sixth place, the word refers to the Perfect Siddha or Perfect Man.[3] The term *Sabad*[4] used by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus identifies mystic contemplation with Shakti as well as Shiva and their union as the course of the existence of the three worlds.[5] In other words the union of Shakti, the sun, and Shiva, the moon, according to the Shaikh, is the *salat-i-ma'kus*[6]

[1]For reference *see* Shaikh Ahmad 'Abdu'l-Haqq and his successors in Chapter Four.
[2]*Alakhbani* or *Rushd-Nama*, edited by S.A.A. Rizvi and S. Zaidi, Aligarh, 1971.

[3]

सबद

अलखदास आखै सुन लोई । दुइ दुइ मत कहो भाई कोई ।
जल थल 'म्हेल' सरब निरन्तर । गोरखनाथ अकेला सोई ॥

सबद

मरिहौ पंडित मरनौ मीठा । जो मरना श्री गोरख धीठा ।
मूए तें जिउ जाय जहाँ । जीवत ही लै रखौ तहाँ ॥
जीउ तें चीरें जो कोउ मुआ । सोइ खेलैं परम निसंक हुआ ॥

[4]*Sabad* or *sabda* means word, but it may also mean a hymn.

[5]

सबद

यह मन सकती यह मन सीव । यह मन तीन भुवन का जीव ।
यह मन लै जो उन्मनि रहै । तीन भुवन का वातैं कहै ॥

[6]*Namaz* performed hanging upside down with the legs suspended from a roof or a branch of a tree. *See* the sections on Shaikh Abu Said bin Abi'l-Khair, pp. 68-69, *supra*, and Baba Farid, p. 139, *supra*, who were both famous for this type of *namaz*.

of the sufis. The yogi equivalent is the *ulti sadhna* (regressive process) involving the 'complete reversal of human behaviour, from "respiratory behaviour" (replaced by *pranayama*) to sexual behaviour (annulled by the technique of the return of semen)'. In a Persian verse Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus says:

> 'Unless the brain comes down to the foot,
> None can reach the doors of God.'[1]

The Nath describes the Supreme Creator as Alakh-Nath (the Incomprehensible or Unseeable One) or as Niranjana. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus also uses the name Alakh Niranjan in the same sense. He says that his Lord is Unseeable (Alakh Niranjan) but those who are able to comprehend Him are lost to themselves. In another verse the Shaikh identifies Niranjan with Khuda and calls Him the creator of the different worlds.[2]

Like the Naths, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus attaches great importance to Onkar.[3] To the Naths the word represents Para-Brahma (transcendent Brahm or the undefinable Absolute). The physical culture of the Naths is designed to make the body incorruptible and purified; Onkar is the basis of *pranayama*. In the initial stages, breath is drawn up through the left nostril, the *ira*, while the sacred Hindu syllable 'Om' is repeated slowly sixteen times. The breath is then suspended in the upper part of the nose where the breath nostrils meet. The junction of the nostrils is called the *sukhmana*. Just as the breath has been drawn up by the left nostril, so it is forced down through the right nostril to *pingala*, while the syllable is again repeated sixteen times. The highest degree of perfection is extremely difficult to achieve, but Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus expects sufis to absorb themselves in Onkar through *zikr*. To him Onkar is the Absolute Oneness, is interchangeable with Niranjana and indicates the state of *sunyata* (void).[4]

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus also explains the concept of *sahaja* according

[1] *Alakhbani*, pp. 66-7.

[2] श्लोक

छिलीस जुग नाम निरंजन (कलि मद्घें) भंजो खुदाय।
अनादि रूपी हंमन सृष्टि रची देवै रूपी जग तरू की माय॥

[3] In medieval devotional literature *Onkar* is an equivalent to *Om* or *Omkar*. This mystical syllable incarnates the mystical essence of the entire cosmos. It has been referred to in many classical Sanskrit works, including the *Mandukya-Upanisad*.

[4] सबद

जहियाँ होता एक अंकार।
कोई न चिन्ता सून बिचार॥
थूल भए हम जाना सून।
जो जानै तिस पाप न पून॥

to Nath traditions. He emphasizes it in the sense of the union between Shakti and Shiva. However, the realization of *sahaja*,[1] says the Shaikh, leads to the achieving of ontological immortality or the sufi *baqa*.' A state of perfect equilibrium, it transcends perceptual knowledge with positive and negative experience. The Nath in such a state is simultaneously both the meditator and the meditation and the divinity meditated upon. The *sunya*, or *sahaja*[2] of the Shaikh is also identical with the *sunya* and the *sahaja* of the Naths.

To both the Naths and Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus, *sabad* stands for the indefinable divine word. It is the source of all words, both heard and unheard, and is perceived by only perfect mystics. Yogic exercises do help to register such mystical sounds but the most important step in the comprehension of *sabad* is to make the Truth dwell in the heart through contemplation. The Shaikh exhorts sufis to meditate on the True Name or *Ism-i A'zam*. In the words of Gorakh, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus warns yogis that wearing rings in their ears and rosaries of Eleocarpus ganitrus around their necks, or the recitation of *sakhi* and *sabad* (Nath poetry), fails to make one a yogi.[3] These were only means to achieve worldly ambitions and were not true Yoga. In the same strain he warned the 'ulama' that they were selling knowledge in return for a living, and would not achieve *Ma'rifa*.

Muhammad was a deep mystery, believed Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus and could not be approached by the mere crying of his name.[4] In fact Ahmad

[1]Like the Brahman of the Upanishads and Vedanta and the Nirvana of the Mahayanists, the state of *Sahaja* is indefinable and cannot be understood dialectically but only through actual experience. The state of Sahaja is achieved by transcending dialectics. According to Kanha: 'He who had immobilized the king of his spirit through identity of enjoyment (*samarasa*) in the state of the Innate (*Sahaja*), instantly becomes a magician; he fears not old age and death.' *Yoga*, pp. 268-69.

[2]

सबद

एक तें हम अनंत भए आपहि आप बियाहि ।
'सहज' कन्या 'संभु' बरु अना उपाम मुसरा जंवाई ।।

[3]

सबद

कानन मुँद्रा गले रुद्राख । फिर फर पढ़हि भुवनै साख ।।
बोलत गौरख सुनिहौं लोय । परतन होय पै जोग न होय ।।
साखी सबदैं नाहीं जोग । फिर फिर देखहि गाँव का लोग ।।

[4] महमद फूल अनादि का फल भै आपुन सोय ।
सो क्यों जानै बापुरा जिह नहि चीन्हा होय ।।
महमद आरिफ़ हो रहै आरिफ़ अहमद सोय ।
अकथ कथा यह लधन की बिरला बूझै कोय ।।
मुझ ही ते अति नीयरा सखिए मेरा कंत ।
तन मन जोबन देख मैं सबही आप इकंत ।।

(Muhammad) and Ahad (One or God) were the same and everyone in the world was misguided because of a failure to understand the true significance of the intervening *mim* (M) in the words Ahmad and Ahad. Although it was a Hindi version of some of Shabistari's verses from the *Gulshan-i Raz*, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus impressively expressed the same idea of the truth in relevance to Nath verses.[1] Shabistari says:

> 'All these varied forms arise only from your fancy,
> They are but one point revolving quickly in a circle.
> It is but one circular line from first to last
> Whereon the creatures of this world are journeying;
> On this road the prophets are as princes,
> Guides, leaders and counsellors.
> And of them our lord Muhammad is the chief,
> At once the first and the last in this matter.
> The One (*Ahad*) was made manifest in the *mim* of Ahmad.
> In this circuit the first emanation became the last.
> A single *mim* divides Ahad from Ahmad
> The world is immersed in that one *mim*.
> In him is completed the end of this road,
> In him is the station of the text "*I call to God*".'[2]

Some verses ascribed to Gorakhnath in the Hindi *Gorakhbani* challenge qazis for mechanically crying the name 'Muhammad'[3] and remind them that it was most improper for them to call themselves Muslims for they recited the *Kalima* without gaining its real meaning. A true Muslim was expected to develop spirituality in the same way as Muhammad and to die to self before the death of his earthly body.[4]

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus finds the teachings of the Naths identical to the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. According to Gorakhnath the Absolute Truth realized in the highest spiritual experience is above the concept of *bhava* (existence) and *abhava* (negation of existence), absolutely devoid of origination and destruction, and beyond the reach of all speculation and imagination. This is *Para-Brahma*, which is without name, form, ego, causality or activity, self-manifestation or internal and external differences. This

[1] दोहरा
महमद महमद जग कहै चीन्है नाहीं कोय।
अहमद मीम गंवाइया कहु क्यों दूजा होय॥

[2] *Gulshan-i Raz*, English translation, p. 2. The reference to the *Qur'an* is from XII, 108.

[3] महंमद महंमद न करि काजी महंमद का बिषम बिचारं।
महंमद हाथि करद जे होती लोहै घड़ी न सारं॥

[4] *Alakhbani*, pp. 72-5.

philosophy of Gorakhnath and the Siddhas called the *Dwaita-dwaita-vilakshana-vada* or *Pakshapata-binirmukta-vada*[1] is nearest to the *Wahdat al-Wujud.* The simile of the relationship between river water and bubbles applied to the Naths could also be used to explain the *Wahdat al-Wujud.*

More Hindi verses in support of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* were added by the Shaikh in the *Rushd-Nama.* He argued that steam rising from a river is called vapour, when it rests in the atmosphere it is called a cloud, if water from the cloud falls into a vessel it is known as water of whatever receptacle it finds itself, if it falls in the form of rain it is known as rain water.[2] The following verses of the Qur'an continues the same theme:

> 'Everyone that is thereon will pass away;
> There remaineth but the countenance of thy Lord of Might and Glory.'[3]
> 'And cry not unto any other god along with Allah.
> There is no God save him.
> Everything will perish save His countenance.
> His is the command, and unto Him ye will be brought back.'[4]

Duality, according to the Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddas is a false concept and the idea of anything besides God is misguided. People should believe only in the Unity of Being.[5]

The sufi theory of creation is also neatly reconciled with the corresponding Nath theory. All sufis believe in the following explanation of creation, said to have been revealed by God to David:

[1] *Philosophy of Gorakhnath*, p. 55.

[2]

दोहरा

जैसो लहर 'समुद्र' की वाहर निकरी माय ।
सदा आन्ह समुन्द वह समुंदहि पैंठी जाय ।।

सबद

साई समुंद अपार अति हम तहँ (हैं) मछल्याहिं ।
'जल में आवहिं जल रहैं मृत्तहु जलही माँहिं ।।

[3] *Qur'an*, LV, no. 26-7.
[4] *Qur'an*, XXVIII, no. 88.

[5]

सबद

अलखदास आखै सुन लोई । दुइ दुइ मत कहौ भाई कौई ।
जल थल 'म्हेल' सरब निरन्तर । गोरखनाथ अकेला सोई ।।

दोहरा

एक अकेला साइयां, दुइ दुइ कहो न कोय ।
बास फूल हैं एक ही, कहु क्यों दूजा होय ।।

'I was a Hidden Treasure and I wished to be known,
so I created creation that I might be known.'

This desire is identical with the concept of divine will as held by the Naths. The Nath theory of the Lord existing alone in a void is no different from Jili's theory of *al-'Ama* (the dark mist and blindness).

To Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus the Nath theory of creation was a replica of Ibn al-'Arabi's theory which the former expressed this way:

> 'When God willed in respect of His Beautiful Names (attributes), which are beyond enumeration, that their essences (*a'yan*)—or if you wish, you may say "His essence (*'aynuhu*)"—should be seen, He caused them to be seen in a microcosmic being (*kawn jami'*) which, inasmuch as it is endowed with existence, contains the whole object of vision, and through which the inmost consciousness (*sirr*) of God becomes manifested to Him. This He did, because the vision that consists in a thing's seeing itself by means of itself is not like its vision of itself in something else that serves as a mirror for it; therefore God appears to Himself in a form given by the place in which He is seen (that is, the mirror), and He would not appear thus (objectively) without the existence of this place and His epiphany to Himself therein. God had already brought the universe into being with an existence resembling that of a fashioned soulless body, and it was like an unpolished mirror.'[1]

All the verses by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus relating to the simile of the mirror and the polishing of the heart are based on ideas expressed by Ibn al-'Arabi[2] and Gorakhnath.

The *pas-i anfas*, founded on the yogic *pranayama* and the ontological physiology of the Naths were subjects around which the Shaikh wrote a number of eloquent verses, and his arguments were presented very forcefully. Quoting the sufi belief that those who had no human *pir* were disciples of the devil, in a Hindi verse the Shaikh said that if a blind man led another blind man, both were bound to fall into a well.[3] A cease-

[1] *Studies in Islamic mysticism*, pp. 154-55.

[2] चौपदा

जब दरसन देखा चहै,
तब आरसी माँजन रहै।
जब आरसी लागी काइ।
तब दरसन देखा न जाइ॥

[3] दोहरा

जागा गुरु जो डूबना चेला काय निराना॥
अंधे अंधा ठेलिया दोऊ कूप पराना॥

less effort was needed to find the perfect *guru* whom the Shaikh likened to a diamond mine—unless it was dug patiently and assiduously, the diamonds would never be found.[1]

The Shaikh's interest in Nath teaching was not merely theoretical. In several ways he found Nath ascetic exercises compatible with Chishti practices. Besides obligatory prayers the Shaikh would perform four hundred *rak'ats*[2] of *namaz* during the day and four hundred *rak'ats* at night. The clothes covering his knees would be threadbare from kneeling. Winter's excessive cold and frost were no obstacle to his praying. After performing the evening *namaz* he would begin the *zikr-i jahr*. Those who joined him would tire, but the Shaikh's absorption in the *Wahdat al-Wujud* failed to quench his enthusiasm. For years after the evening *namaz* he would perform the *namaz-i ma'kus*. This was carried out by hanging, probably head downwards, and was generally continued the whole night.[3] Although Chishtis believed this type of *namaz* to be a legacy from the Prophet, as pointed out earlier, Shaikh Abu Sa'id bin Abi'l Khair was the first known sufi to have practised it; the first Indian sufi to perform it was Baba Farid. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus considered it to be the counterpart of the *ulti sadhna*.[4] Continual performance of *namaz-i ma'kus* produced in the Shaikh a condition he called *sultan-i zikr* in which one experienced strange changes in the physical and spiritual condition including a deprivation of the senses and a lack of feeling of consciousness. Repeated appearances of the *sultan-i zikr* led to the state of *fana' al-fana*.' A description of this spiritual experience, given by Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din, would tend to indicate that *sultan-i zikr* was comparable to the Nath Siddha's *nad*,[5] and that *fana' al-fana'* was a state experienced by the *jivan-mukta*.

Sultan-i Zikr, Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din's description continued, would appear just before waking. During that period external senses were very weak, the inner contemplation made wakefulness and sleep appear identical. Later the state would reappear during consciousness. Initially the contemplative was quite frightened, but gradually he became accustomed to the condition. The seeker of God waited for the reappearance of this state in which he could simultaneously perceive both the entire world and identify those who were obsessed with it. Sometimes the

1

चौपद

गुरु हीरा गिरि चिरा कुदार । खोदे निकसै हीरा सार ।।

2The word comes from *ruku* or the inclination of the head in prayers (*salat* or *namaz*) with the palms of the hands resting on the knees. The number of *rak'ats* or *rak'as* (genuflections) for different prayers vary.

3Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din, *Lata'if-i Quddusi*, Delhi, 1311/1894, pp. 15-16.

4'Going against the current' (*ujana sadhna*) or a 'regressive' process, implying a complete 'inversion' of all psychophysiological processes. *Yoga*, p. 270.

5A mystical voice.

meditator lost consciousness of himself as a spatial entity and was plunged into the state of *fana' al-fana'*.

Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din then compared the condition of *sultan-i zikr* with that experienced by the Prophet Muhammad when he received *wahi*.[1] In short, he added that at the commencement of *sultan-i zikr*, the meditator felt as if he were listening to the humming of a bell whose sound then gradually became thunderous.[2] According to Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus this had special relevance to *nad* and was a privilege of only a few outstanding sufis.[3]

The author of this remarkable Nath Hindi poetry, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus Gangohi, used Alakh as his Hindi *nom de plume*. The Shaikh was initiated into the Chishti-Sabiri order of Shaikh Ahmad 'Abdu'l-Haqq who, like his father, wrote Hindi verses, some of which were incorporated by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus into the *Rushd-Nama*. Shaikh 'Arif's successor was Shaikh Muhammad who was the same age as Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus. In order to have a living *pir* as a guide, the latter obtained initiation from Shaikh Muhammad and also claimed to have directly obtained inspiration from the spirit of Shaikh Ahmad 'Abdu'l-Haqq.

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus came from Rudauli and was born about AD 1456. His father Shaikh Isma'il was an *'alim* but he was also a friend of Shaikh Ahmad 'Abdu'l-Haqq. From his childhood, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus was drawn to a life of asceticism and although he obtained a formal education from eminent 'ulama' his absorbing interest was in the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. He decided to dedicate his life to the service of Shaikh Ahmad's *khanqah* and to live the life of a celibate. Forced by his parents to marry, the Shaikh continuously neglected his family by spending every possible moment in prayer and meditation. He seems to have written his two most significant works, the *Anwaru'l-'Uyun* and the *Rushd-Nama* at Rudauli.

In *c.* 1491 Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus migrated to Shahabad, in Ambala near Delhi. On 5 Jumada I 897/5 March 1492, his son Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din, the commentator of the *Rushd-Nama* and the author of the *Lata'if-i Quddusi*, was born.[4] The reasons for the Shaikh's migration, as given in the *Lata'if-i Quddusi*, are emotional. The work states that Rudauli had succumbed to the infiltration of *kafirs*, Islamic practices disappeared and pork was openly sold in the bazaar. So concerned was the Shaikh that he left Rudauli for Sultan Sikandar Lodi's camp at Nakhna. One

[1]Inspiration received from the angel Gabriel by the ears of the Prophet Muhammad; the occasion engendered a supernatural condition in the Prophet.

[2]*Lata'if-i Quddusi*, pp. 16-7.

[3] सबद

सुनहु पडित सुनहु अचारिज निसब्दै, सबद समाय ।
सबदै रिद्धि सिद्धि सब्दै मुख मुकुति सबद अनूतर साय ।।

[4]*Lata'if-i Quddusi*, p. 31.

of the Shaikh's servants informed 'Umar Khan Sarwani, the vizier of Sultan Sikandar, of the situation, and he invited him to settle in his *pargana*[1] at Shahabad. It would appear, however, that the move was precipitated more by expedient than pious motives and that it was 'Umar Khan's offer of hospitality rather than the threat to Islam in Rudauli that prompted the Shaikh's migration.

The relationship between Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus and 'Umar Khan Sarwani was long-standing. The latter had been an important Afghan chief under Sultan Bahlul and had been despatched to serve Prince Nizam Khan, who later succeeded his father as Sultan Sikandar. 'Umar Khan's relations with Prince Nizam deteriorated and he fled to the court of a rival, Prince Barbak Shah, the governor of Jaunpur. Not succeeding at Jaunpur, 'Umar Khan sought shelter with the saints of Rudauli. There Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus prayed that 'Umar Khan's fortune might change. Soon afterwards he was reconciled with the Prince.

The Rajput invasions of Rudauli and other predominantly Muslim towns in the Sharqi kingdom were commonplace occurrences. In the lifetime of Shaikh Ahmad 'Abdu'l-Haqq, Rudauli was invaded by a neighbouring Hindu chief.[2] The Afghan wars with the Sharqi kings, whom the Rajput chiefs supported, and later Barbak's struggle to succeed Sultan Bahlul, greatly assisted the consolidation of Rajput power in that region.

After his accession, Sultan Sikandar defeated Barbak near Kanauj but in order to further strengthen his position, he restored the throne of Jaunpur to Barbak. Barbak was not however interested either in crushing the Rajput power or uprooting Husain Shah Sharqi. The region remained torn with war until Barbak was finally expelled from Jaunpur in 1493. It is little wonder therefore that Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus preferred to migrate to a more peaceful region and seized the opportunity when it arose. However, he does not seem to have accepted either financial assistance or land grants. His family then faced a severe economic crisis often starving for days. But like many other outstanding sufis, the Shaikh's meditation was undisturbed by such a situation.[3]

After settling in Shahabad, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus visited Ajodhan and Multan. He seems to have visited Delhi more than once and became friendly with Sultan Sikandar Lodi.

In a letter to the Sultan, the Shaikh reminded him of his duties as a ruler. His advice was based on the traditional Perso-Islamic political theories defined by Ghazali, but it marks a departure from the traditional Chishti practice of unreserved non-involvement in politics. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus wrote to Sikandar Lodi that an hour spent by rulers in the pursuit of justice was more commendable than sixty hours of prayers

[1]A grouping of villages for purposes of revenue collection and administration.
[2]*Anwaru'l-'Uyun*, p. 24.
[3]*Lata'if-i Quddusi*, p. 31.

by others. He went on to write that religious faith and the well-being of the state depended on the Sultan; in his absence men would devour each other. Communities needed kings just as the body needed the soul. Sultans were distinguished by the title 'Shadow of God on Earth.' If a monarch neglected to protect the weak, the holy, the 'ulama' and mystics, the world would become anarchic.[1]

The number of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus' disciples increased and he corresponded with many who lived away from Shahabad.

Babur's victory over Dipalpur and Lahore in 1523–24 made regions around Delhi exceedingly unsafe both to Muslims and non-Muslims. According to Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din, a large number of 'ulama' and holy men were killed and their libraries destroyed.[2] A lot of Punjabi families moved to safer areas and amongst the emigrants was the Shaikh who settled at Gangoh in the Saharanpur district of U.P. He returned to Shahabad again when his house and thatched *jama'at-khana* there were burnt in an accidental fire. Meanwhile, Babur marched to Panipat where the Mughal army was opposed by Ibrahim Lodi's forces. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus and his family accompanied the rear of the Lodi army for safety. Sultan Ibrahim had the Shaikh brought to his camp where the latter predicted his impending defeat. The Shaikh told his disciples and family to flee to the eastern districts. Only the Shaikh, his son and a Saiyid servant remained at the Afghan camp. After Ibrahim Lodi's defeat at Panipat on 20 April 1526, the three were captured and taken to Delhi where they were released by Babur. Leaving Delhi the Shaikh retired to Gangoh where he remained for the rest of his life.

There is no tangible evidence that Babur met the Shaikh, however, it is quite likely as the Emperor always showed a great interest in sufis and holy men. Moreover a letter written by the Shaikh to Babur indicates that they were acquainted with each other. Apparently Babur had suggested the imposition of *'ushr*[3] on the *wajah-i ma'ash*[4] of the 'ulama' and the sufis. While requesting the Emperor to honour, 'ulama,' *aima*[5] and the weak, the Shaikh commented, that the imposition of *'ushr* upon the *wajh-i ma'ash* of these classes should not be permitted and should be considered a heinous sin; he added it was a particularly unwise act to ask for money from dervishes. The tax should be remitted so that all those people who would have fallen into such a category could live peacefully and pray for the prosperity of the Emperor and the Muslim community. The *muhtasibs*[6] should be appointed in towns and bazaars so that the *Shari'a* could be enforced. The *jama'*[7] should be realized

[1] *Maktubat-i Quddusiyya*, pp. 44-6.
[2] *Lata'if-i Quddusi*, pp. 63-4; *Gulshan-i Ibrahimi*, p. 202.
[3] One-tenth of the produce.
[4] Rent-free grants to holy men and the 'ulama.'
[5] Holy men.
[6] Officers for the enforcement of Islamic law in urban areas.
[7] Land revenue.

according to the traditions of the *Khulfa-i Rashidun*, the First Four Caliphs, and their successors. Only the pious should be appointed as government officers so that revenue could be collected according to the *Shari'a*. No *kafir* should be appointed to any post in the *diwan*[1] of a Muslim capital or should hold offices such as *amirs*[2] and *'amil*.[3] They should receive no financial assistance from the government, and should live in a miserable condition. Kafirs should be forced to pay regular revenue and taxes on their agricultural and commercial undertakings, their dress should differ from Muslims, their worship should be in secret and they should not openly indulge in heretical practices. They should not draw salaries from the *Baitu'l-mal*[4] but confine their activities to their traditional trades and professions. Equal treatment with Muslims was not to be given in the interests of Islam.[5]

The puritanically severe demands made by the Shaikh to Babur were matched only by those emanating from the most conservative amongst the orthodox. No doubt his attitude was prompted by the imposition of *'ushr* on the property held by the 'ulama' and sufis, and like many he considered the Hindu officers of the *diwan* responsible for the financial difficulties of the upper class Muslims.

As we shall see, Guru Nanak exhibited more equanimity and resignation in the divine will than Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus. It is interesting that the Shaikh objected to Hindus holding high administrative posts, at the same time failing to censure the Rajput military classes and showing no concern for Hindus charging high interest rates as long as they were involved in traditional roles. It would not be unfair to suggest that the Shaikh's views were inconsistent and extreme and the result of a sufi theorist indulging in politics in a polarized fashion.

Another letter was written by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus to Prince Humayun recommending that he accord honourable status to the 'ulama' and holy men. Humayun paid a visit to the Shaikh's hermitage in Gangoh. On 23 Jumada II 944/27 November 1537 the Shaikh died.[6] Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din was, however, critical of Humayun's religious policy. The *Lata'if-i Quddusi* was commenced a month before his father's death and completed after it. In it Humayun was accused of not making a distinction between the *kufr* and Islam.[7]

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus had a large number of sons who in turn had many disciples. His successor was Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din who died in AD 1575–76. His *khalifa* was, however, Shaikh Jalal Thaneswari, who died in 1581–82. Besides the *Lata'if-i Quddusi*, Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din

[1]A chancery, concerning civil administration.
[2]Governors.
[3]A revenue official.
[4]The treasury of the Muslim state.
[5]*Maktubat-i Quddusiyya*, pp. 236-37.
[6]*A'in*, III, p. 176; *Lata'if-i Quddusi*, p. 70.
[7]ibid, pp. 79-81.

compiled a commentary on the *Rushd-Nama*. His most difficult problem was to justify the contents of his father's above work. He was asked how could the poetry of the yogis and *sannyasis* embody truths about the *Tawhid* as the moral principles of religions came from the prophets alone who were themselves divinely inspired. The Shaikh's reply was that a number of Qur'anic verses indicated that from the time of Adam to Muhammad more than a hundred thousand prophets were sent to guide different religious communities. Each country and nation received its own prophet. The verses in the Qur'an say:

> 'Lo! we have sent thee with the Truth, a bearer of glad tidings and a warner; and there is not a nation but a warner hath passed among them.'[1]
> 'Whosoever goeth right, it is only for (the good of) his own soul he goeth right, and whosoever erreth, erreth only to its hurt. No laden soul can bear another's load. We never punish until We have sent a messenger.'[2]

The prophets taught their respective communities in the local language and also received divine books in the vernacular. This was so that people might not be reproachful on the Day of Resurrection that the prophet had not taught them in their own language. Thus the Qur'an says:

> 'And We never sent a messenger save with the language of his folk, that he might make (the message) clear for them. Then Allah sendeth whom He will astray, and guideth whom He will. He is the Mighty, the Wise.'[3]

Therefore argued Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din, it was impossible to believe that a prophet had not been sent to India and that the *Tawhid* had not been taught in Indian languages. Kafirs had distorted their prophets' message and had reverted to idol worship because of the interference of devils. The Qur'an states:

> 'And for every nation there is a messenger. And when their messenger cometh (on the Day of Judgement) it will be judged between them fairly, and they will not be wronged.'[4]

Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din reinforced his arguments by also quoting from works on *Hadis* implying that Indian religions were founded on the *Tawhid* and must therefore contain the essence of Reality.[5]

[1] *Qur'an*, XXXV, 24.
[2] XVII, 15.
[3] XIV, 4.
[4] X, 48.
[5] *Rushd Nama*, Aligarh MS., ff. 50a-2a.

Turning now to other works of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus we should first mention his earliest literary attempt which was begun before his migration to Shahabad. This was a Persian poetical translation of the *Chanda'in*. The manuscript however was lost during the upheavals in Rudauli caused by the wars between Sultan Bahlul and Husain Shah Sharqi. A short treatise by the Shaikh entitled *Nuru'l-Huda* included an account of creation and was intended to supplement the *Rushd-Nama*.[1] The *Qurratu'l-'Ain* was another detailed work on the *Wahdat al-Wujud*.[2] One of his treatises, the *Risala-i Qudsiyya*, was mentioned by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq.[3]

The letters which Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus wrote were collected by his disciple, Buddhan, the son of Rukn Siddiqi of Jaunpur, under the title the *Maktubat-i Quddusiyya*. The work contains 189 letters which deal with almost every significant sufi theme. Also included are several Hindi verses. In a letter to Qazi 'Abdu'r-Rahman Sufi of Shahabad the Shaikh wrote that the world was full of impostors and charlatans and then quoted the verse from the *Rushd-Nama* relating to the blind leading the blind, at the same time stating that it had been written by Shaikh Nur.[4] A disciple worshipping his *pir* was better than the worshipper of the Lord, argued the Shaikh, for the latter was busy with the contemplation of his own self and therefore neglected God; one who adored his *pir*, however, worshipped God through the contemplation of His creature.[5]

A Hindi verse, *Giri Parbat Bich Base Hamaro Mit*, 'Our Love Crosses Obstacles of Mountains,' so strongly stimulated Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus to meditate on the Omnipotence of the Lord that this prompted him to write a long letter to Bahlul Sufi explaining the subtleties contained in the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. He went on to say that *kufr* and sin alone were not obstacles to the perception of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*; faith, obedience, prayer, piety and so on, could also serve as great hindrances.[6]

The letters of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus to Shaikh Jalal Thaneswari feature very subtle explanations of the Unity of Being. They emphasize that love is the principal cause for the creation of the world. From a superficial viewpoint love appears easy, in reality, however, it reduces the lover to ashes. He supports this idea by quoting a number of Hindi verses on the subject, some of which were extracted from the *Rushd-Nama*.[7] In another letter to Shaikh Jalal, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus quotes the verse: 'Had the idol worshippers been able to know the truth about

[1]Ethé, 1924 (14).
[2]Ethé, 1924 (16).
[3]*AA*, p. 223.
[4]*Maktubat-i Quddusiyya*, p. 124.
[5]ibid, p. 125.
[6]ibid, pp. 46-7.
[7]ibid, pp. 89-90, 101.

the idol, they would have not been misled.' He adds that one who had learnt to perceive God saw nothing but Him, however one who had learnt to see everything else but God failed to see Him at all. To the Shaikh he who saw God and not a stone idol was in fact His worshipper, whereas one who never saw God but stone was given to vanity and infidelity. He then quoted the following Persian verse by Shaikh Bu 'Ali Qalandar, and used a *doha* from the *Chanda'in* to support it. The verse can be translated as follows:

> 'Whatever form Thou assumeth people prostrate
> But they don't eat any fruit from the garden of Thy love.'[1]

Contacts between Kashmiri Shaivism and Sufis

The *Lalla-Vakyani* or the 'Wise Sayings of Lal Ded or Lalla' had a strong effect on local sufis. A Kashmiri Shaivite, popularly known as Lal Ded, Lal Didi, and Ma'i Lal Diddi, Lalla is also known by her Sanskritized names, Lalla Yogishwari or Laleshwari. Her family were Brahmans from Pompur and she appears to have been born sometime in the middle of the fourteenth century. As was the custom of her caste, at an early age Lalla was suitably married to a member of another Brahman caste; however, spurning family life she became a Shaivite yogini.

Lalla began wandering around Kashmir in the typical garb of a mendicant. According to legend she met Mir Saiyid 'Ali Hamadani on several occasions and modern scholars such as R.C. Temple[2] and Muhibbu'l Hasan[3] have mistakenly sought to prove a sufi influence on Lalla's verses composed while in a state of ecstasy. These, however, so strongly express the teachings of the Kashmiri Shaivites that such a theory seems implausible. Her themes include such beliefs that the Supreme Reality, identified as Shiva, underlies the Changeless Reality and that He is Eternal and Infinite, All-Pervading and All-Transcending. In His immanent aspect, Shiva is diffused throughout the universe and in His transcendental state He is beyond all universal manifestation. Shakti is an aspect of Shiva who is both He and She, a unity in duality, and a duality in unity. The manifestation of the universe is 'an expression of Shiva, the highest Reality.' She says:

> 'Ice and snow and water: these be three
> That to thy vision separate seem:
> But they are one to the eyes that see
> By light of the Consciousness Supreme.
> What the cold doth part, the sun combines:
> What the sun doth part, doth Shiva make whole:

[1] *Maktubat-i Quddusiyya*, pp. 171-73.
[2] R.C. Temple, *The words of Lalla*, Cambridge, 1924, pp. 1-5.
[3] M. Hasan, *Kashmir under the Sultans*, Calcutta, 1959, pp. 238-39.

What Shiva doth part, the Supreme confines
In one Shiva and Universe and Soul.

What are thine idols but lumps of stone?
What but stone the temples that are thine?
Venerable Brahman, who alone
Offerings to these to make Divine?
Hold the breaths that in thy body rise,
Meditating on the One alone;
So thou be of understanding wise
And thou know Him to be not of stone.'[1]

The cross fertilization of sufi beliefs with those expressed by Lalla throughout her verses led to the establishment of the Rishi order of sufis in Kashmir. Its founder was Shaikh Nuru'd-Din Rishi who, according to some authorities, was born on 10 Zu'lhijja, 779/9 April 1378.[2] Tradition has it that in his childhood Shaikh Nuru'd-Din Rishi received an education in how to be both a robber and a weaver but in both fields he was to prove a poor pupil. Although he was brought up as a Muslim, he did not obtain a formal religious education. Later he admitted that he did many penances to atone for his illiteracy. Performing the usual ascetic exercises of a mystic, the Shaikh lived in a cave in the village of Kaimuh near Srinagar, at the same time totally abstaining from meat and gaining nourishment from wild spinach and leaves.[3] Some Kubrawiyya sources attempt to show that Shaikh Nuru'd-Din was initiated into the order by one of the *khalifas* of Mir Saiyid 'Ali Hamadani, while some anachronistically make the Shaikh a disciple of the Mir himself.[4] It would seem, however, that the Shaikh obtained inspiration from Lalla who by that time was well-known to Kashmiris. Serious differences between the attitude to religion and mysticism of the Kubrawiyya and of Shaikh Nuru'd-Din would make any relationship unlikely. Some early Rishi sources state that the Shaikh was an Uwaisi who obtained initiation directly from the spirit of the Prophet. According to Jonaraja, the Shaikh was the greatest sage of his time.[5] Shaikh Nuru'd-Din died on 26 Ramazan 842/12 March 1439, in the reign of Sultan Zainu'l-'Abidin.[6]

The Shaikh's teachings are embodied in his Kashmiri verses, some of which are almost identical to those written by Lalla. However, there are some verses which are authoritatively attributed to Shaikh

[1] *The words of Lalla*, pp. 113, 115, 177-78, 193; the verses are on p. 179.

[2] Baba Nasib, *Rishi Nama*, India Office, Delhi, Persian no. 731, f. 129a-138a; 'Abdu'l-Wahhab Nuri, *Futuhat-i Kubrawiyya*, Srinagar MS, ff. 84b-6b.

[3] *Futuhat-i Kubrawiyya*, ff. 69b.

[4] ibid, f. 82a.

[5] *Rajatarangini*, p. 126.

[6] *Rishi Nama'*, ff. 152b-55b; Muhammad A'zam, *Tarikh-i A'zami*, Lahore, 1303/1885-86, p. 64.

Nuru'd-Din. Through them the Shaikh emerges as an ardent devotee of God trying to reach the Unknowable in the heart by lighting the lamp of love. The 'ulama' distinguished between the spirit and the flesh but the *'arif* (gnostic) emphasized the disparity between the desires of the spirit and those of the flesh. To him the insects and worms in his cave were his companions in the adoration of God. He also believed the lower self should be subdued mercilessly as it was man's greatest enemy. Like all ascetics, he considered *mullas* to be hypocrites who recited the Qur'an for money and were unconcerned with its message.[1] A true slave of God depended on no one for his survival. To the Shaikh the Islamic profession of faith was incomplete without a valid recognition of the reality of the self.

Shaikh Nuru'd-Din and his disciples preferred to call themselves Rishis not sufis. Of his many disciples, Bamu'd-Din, Zainu'd-Din and Latifu'd-Din were Brahmans by birth and had become Muslims under the influence of their *pir's* intense spiritualism. The stories of their conversions are like many others concerned with mystic conversions, but all consistently portray Shaikh Nuru'd-Din as a spiritual beacon to Kashmiri Muslims and Hindus alike. Shaikh Zainu'd-Din invented a distinctive dress for Rishis which consisted of a variegated woollen cloak with a black and white pattern running through it.[2]

Among other eminent disciples of Shaikh Nuru'd-Din were Nasru'd-Din and Qiyamu'd-Din, who both had a number of important disciples of their own. A century later many Rishis also began to live in *khanqahs*, accepting land and money from the government and their own devotees. Nevertheless they remained dedicated servants of the people, irrespective of class and religious distinctions. The Rishis strongly impressed both Abu'l-Fazl and Emperor Jahangir. Both mention them planting fruit trees for the benefit of the people.[3] Rishi authors believed that members of their order had turned Kashmir into a heaven for the people, although they themselves led harshly austere lives. The contemplative life of the Rishis was founded on the *pas-i anfas* or *pranayama*. Generally they remained celibate believing that a family was a great impediment to the pursuit of a saintly life. Shaikh Nuru'd-Din admitted that although meat eating was permitted by the *Shari'a* to him it was cruelty to animals.[4]

Sufi and Nath interaction in Bengal

Bengal was the state in which Hatha-Yogic practices became known to the sufis because of the early translation into Arabic and Persian of the *Amrita-Kunda*. However, no Bengali work in prose or poetry on sufism written between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries has yet

[1] *Rishi Nama*, ff. 173a-b.
[2] *Futuhat-i Kubrawiyya*, ff. 92a-96b.
[3] *A'in*, II, p. 170, III, p. 549; *Tuzuk-i Jahangiri*, p. 302.
[4] Dawud Mishkati, *Asraru'l-Abrar*, ff. 236a-b.

come to light. The social ethics of the yogis impressed eminent sufis, such as Shaikh Ahmad 'Abdu'l-Haqq of Rudauli, but the leading sufis of thirteenth and fourteenth century Bengal were all Persian scholars. They may have taken some interest in the popular mystic poetry of Bengal but there is no evidence to corroborate this view. The patronage of the Bengali language by the Husain Shahi Sultans (1494–1538 AD) was the greatest incentive for the emergence of a body of Bengali literature. M.R. Tarafdar divides these works into the following categories:

(a) 'the poems dealing with the snake cult,
(b) the versified translation of the *Mahabharat*,
(c) the Vaisnava *Padavali*,
(d) a poem on Yoga philosophy and
(e) romantic poems represented by the Vidya-Sundara of Shidhara.'[1]

Tarafdar adds that in 1498–99 Shaikh Zahid wrote a book on Yoga philosophy called the *Adya Parichaya*. Although he is not certain of the date of its composition it would seem to be the earliest of its genre, and is based on the *Bahru'l-Hayat*. As a microcosm, the human body is depicted as possessing all the attributes of the world. In it are located earth, air, fire, heaven, the world and the lower world. It is the abode of the four *Yugas*,[2] the four Vedas and the four scriptures (the Old and the New Testaments, the Psalms and the *Qur'an*).

One of the more important seventeenth century contributions is the *Goraksha-Bijay*, based on the Sanskrit work said to have been composed by Gorakhnath.[3] Shaikh Chand wrote the *Haragouri Sangbad*, a work on the Nath esoteric ideas of physical culture. 'Abdu'l Hakim (1620–90) of Svandvip was the author of a long Bengali poem on the mysterious *chakras* in the *Chari-Maqamer Bhed*.[4] He identified the Nath *chakras* with the stations in sufism.

Better known is the *Yoga Qalandar* by Saiyid Murtaza (1590–1662) from Murshibabad.[5] He traced the Qalandariyya discipline back to Shaikh Abu 'Ali Qalandar. According to him the *nasut* was the abode of 'Izra'il[6] and could be identified with the *muladhara*. *Zikr* based on the *kalima* purified the mind and contributed to the development of mystical regeneration. The *Malakut* was identical with the *manipura cakra* and was the navel of the region, which was connected with angels. A

[1]M.R. Tarafdar, *Husain shahi Bengal*, Dacca, 1965, p. 240.

[2]An epoch or era according to Hindu cosmology. There are four ages of the world; the present age, the *Kaliyuga*, began in 3102 BC and is a period of confusion and strife.

[3]Written by Shaikh Faizu'llah; *see* S.S. Husain, *Descriptive catalogue of Bengali manuscripts*, in Munshi 'Abdu'l Karim's Collection, Dacca, 1960, pp. 111-19. All Bengali titles and names have been transliterated according to the system in the catalogue.

[4]ibid, pp. 251-52.

[5]ibid, pp. 386, 388, 391-95.

[6]Name of the angel of death, also spelt 'Azrail' in European literature.

guru chose the Sublime Name of God (Ism-i A'zam) from the *kalima* and prescribed it to disciples in order to make them perfect. The mystic state of *Jabarut*, emanated from the cerebral region and was presided over by the angel Mika'il; it was also related to Allah and his great *sakha* (friend) Muhammad. Meditation with the picture of the devotee's *guru* in his mind enabled the seeker to hear the mystical *anahata sabda* (sound) and see the divine light. The *Lahut* in the heart was identified with the *anahata-cakra* of the yogis.[1]

Saiyid Sultan (1550–1648) of Chittagong, a leading sufi in that region, had great power to arouse human emotions through his expressive writing and composed a number of Bengali poetical works on themes relating to the life of Muhammad. Some important titles are the *Shab-i Mi'raj* (Night Journey of Muhammad to Heaven) of *Wafat-i Rasul*[2] (Death of the Prophet Muhammad) and the *Iblis Nama*[3] (Iblis and the Mysteries of Creation). His *magnum opus* is *Nabibangsa*[4] or the Bengali translation of the *Qisas al-Ambiya*[5] (Legendary Tales of the Prophets). His mystical poems such as *Gnan Chautisa*[6] and *Gnan Pradip*[7] were believed to have been written in his old age in an attempt to reconcile Hatha-Yoga with sufism. The *Gnana Pradipa* gives a detailed analysis of the mystic physiology of *Hatha-Yoga* in order to make sufi perception of the *Pas-i Anfas* more meaningful. He writes:

> '*Ingala* and *pingala* are the two nerves running by the two sides of the spinal chord and looking like two creeping plants hanging by the two sides of a tree. The nerve *ingala* in the right may be compared with the sun and the *pingala* in the left resembles the moon. The *ingala* is the flow of the Ganges and the *pingala* that of the Jamna. The nerve running between the god and the demon is called *Susumna*. These three meet at a point which is regarded by the wise as the confluence of the three sacred rivers.'[8]

Some Muslim Bengali scholars characterize the mystic themes in Bengali works as heterodox[9] but the term is hardly applicable to the sufi movement in any region. Sufism had had a long tradition of borrowing both ideas and practices from other non-Islamic mystical systems and Bengali sufis did not depart seriously from the path shown by their predecessors.

[1] Asim Roy, *Islam in the environment of medieval Bengal*, unpublished Australian National University Ph.D. Thesis, 1970, p. 233.

[2] *Descriptive catalogue of Bengali manuscripts*, pp. 36-42, 44-7.

[3] ibid, pp. 30-3.

[4] ibid, pp. 222-25, 227-32.

[5] ibid, pp. 225.

[6] ibid, pp. 123, 157-58.

[7] M.A. Rahim, *Social and cultural history of Bengal*, II, Karachi, 1967, pp. 331-32.

[8] *Husain Shahi Bengal*, p. 295.

[9] *Social and cultural history of Bengal*, II, pp. 341-56.

The works of the Bengali poets were similar to the *Rushd-Nama* of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus Gangohi who, during his lifetime as today, enjoys great respect from all classes of Muslims. To call Bengali sufism heterodox amounts to the application of a concept on sufism which has no relevance to such a system at all.

Yogic syncretism

The Naths and the Siddhas spread from the Panjab to Bengal lived in forests, wandered in towns and also established permanent monasteries. By the fifteenth century many groups of Muslims also became yogis, though not necessarily Naths or Siddhas. Some became professional beggars and acrobats. Mixed with the Muslim followers of Shah Madar and qalandars, a section of yogis also popularized syncretic beliefs. They considered Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh to be both angels and disciples of Gorakhnath. They also claimed all the prophets and apostles as his disciples. To yogis the Prophet Muhammad was a pupil and disciple of Gorakhnath but they concealed this belief for fear of Muslim retribution. Baba Ratan Hajji was identified with Gorakhnath and it was asserted that the Prophet had learnt Yoga through the Baba.[1]

The Vaishnavites

The Vaishnavite influence on sufism made itself felt mainly through its devotional poetry. This form of Hinduism involved the worship of Vishnu or Narayana, a major god of the Hindu pantheon who was generally adored in the form of two of his ten incarnations, Rama and Krishna, and also in the form of the worship of their consorts. The Vaishnavism of al-Biruni's days was founded on four works: the *Vishnu-Purana*, the *Bhagavata-Purana*, the *Bhagavad-Gita* and the *Harivamsa*. Its earliest known expression was in the *Pancharatra Agamas*[2] of Sandilya who lived around AD 100, but the movement was temporarily checked by the influence of the great Vedantic philosopher, and uncompromising monist, Shankaracharya.

In the tenth and eleventh centuries Vaishnavism was revived by Natha-muni, Yamuna and most significantly by the philosopher and *bhakta* (Hindu devotee), Ramanuja. All emphasized devotion through image worship and simple rituals rather than by means of knowledge, the antithesis of Shankara's philosophy. The hymns of the Alvars,[3] in South India during the seventh and ninth centuries became models for the later Marathi and Hindi Vaishnavite songs. The Alvars wandered from one town to the next singing ecstatic songs and dancing rapturously. They advocated the personal existence of the One Supreme Being and sang

[1] *Dabistan-i Mazahib*, pp. 179-80. In fact Ratannath, a contemporary of Gorakhnath, was a very important figure of the movement.

[2] B. Walker, *Hindu world*, II, London, 1968, pp. 176-77.

[3] ibid, I, pp. 32-3.

in praise of Narayana, Rama and of the love between Krishna and the *gopis* (cowgirls). Rebels against the superior caste claims of the Brahmans, the greatest of the Alvars was Namalvar (*c.* AD 800), himself a lowly Sudra. Trimulisari, another Alvar, like Saraha-Pa wrote:

> 'Jains are ignorant; Buddhists have fallen into a snare; Shaivites are without enlightenment and those who will not worship Vishnu are low indeed.'[1]

Ramanuja, whose dates are believed to be 1050 and 1137, was born near what is now Madras and was educated at Conjeeveram. Visiting all the Hindu centres of pilgrimage in northern and southern India, he settled in Srirangam in the south. Flaunting tradition he taught that all classes should be given access to the sacred Vedas. Although he wrote in Sanskrit, his disciples used the vernacular Tamil. Ramanuja permitted idol worship and accepted the Hindu division of society into castes, but he admitted Sudras and outcastes to his order. Criticizing the theories of Shankaracharya, a Shaivite, he scathingly wrote:

> 'This entire teaching is nothing but a web of false reasoning. His understanding must have been disturbed by illusory imaginations arising from sins he had committed in his previous births. He who knows the right relation of things must reject such foolish doctrines.'[2]

Ramanuja preached that the individual human soul is not identical with the Supreme but is a fragment of the latter. Dependant on the Supreme Being the human soul has a separate identity but both possess Reality. His doctrine became known as the *visisht-advaita*, that is, qualified non-dualism, as opposed to the pure monism, *advaita* (allowing no second), of Shankara. The knowledge of this separation assisted in the practice of devotion through which one could achieve *mukti* (redemption). To Ramanuja, Shankara's philosophy, involving salvation through knowledge, was on an inferior level to the path of *Bhakti*.

Madhava (1197–1280) was a Kanarese Brahman who also opposed Shankara's *advaita* and formulated the idea of *dvaita*, total dualism. He emphasized that Brahma or God was Supreme and the creator of the world and that as such was in essence different to the *jiva* or human soul. Although he did not reject devotion to Shiva, Madhava was basically a Vaishnavite.

Nimbarka (*c.* 1130–1200), a Telugu Brahman, taught that Brahma had an independent Reality, that he was absolute existence and the creator and sustainer of the universe. The individual soul of man possessing self-consciousness was both created, finite and sustained by Brahma,

[1] B. Walker, *Hindu world*, I, London, 1968, p. 33.
[2] ibid, II, p. 350.

but not identical to Him. Devotion at the lotus-feet of Krishna and his consort Radha was the most effective path to salvation and the end of the eternal process of *samsara* (transmigration). Nimbarka's philosophy was known as *dvaitadvaita* (dualistic non-dualism).

A new dimension was added to Vaishnavite devotionalism by a contemporary of Nimbarka, the Sanskrit poet Jayadeva (*c.* 1100) a protege of the Sena court in Bengal. His masterpiece is the poetic drama the *Gita-Govinda* involving stories of Krishna, Radha and the *gopis*. It has been suggested that Jayadeva's Sanskrit version is based on the *Apbrahmsa* (Transitional Vernacular or Archaic Bengali) and that the Krishna cult had really begun much earlier than the twelfth century. The *Granth Sahib* incorporates some hymns by Jayadeva in Hindi and gives the author a prominent place in the list of *bhaktas*.

The great Marathi poet, Jnanadeva (1275–96), wrote a Marathi version of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, fusing the poems with devotional philosophy. He also composed emotive Vaishnavite songs in the same language. Born around 1270, Namdeva came from a low caste family of Pandharpur tailors. His hymns in both Marathi and Hindi are marked by a deep Vaishnavite faith and contain elements which were the basis of the *Nirguna Bhakti* movement, discussed at the end of this chapter. To Namdeva the invisible and wonderful God who alone is Reality speaks to every heart. There is a story that once he fell into a trance and believed himself to be playing cymbals in God's honour; God finally appeared and took the instruments from him. On awaking Namdeva composed the following hymn of praise:

'Come God, the Qalandar
Wearing the dress of an Abdali.[1]
The firmament is the hat on Thy head,
the seven nether regions Thy slippers;
All animals with skins are Thy temples; thus art
Thou decked out, O God!
The fifty-six millions of *clouds* are Thy robes and
the sixteen thousand *queens of Krishan* Thy waistbands;
The eighteen loads of vegetables are Thy clubs,
the whole world is Thy salver;
Nama's body is Thy mosque, his heart Thy priest
who tranquilly prayeth.
O Thou with and without form,
Thou who art wedded to lady Lakshmi,
While I was worshipping Thou hadst my cymbals taken from me:
to whom shall I complain?
Nama's Lord is the searcher of all hearts,
and wandereth in every Land.'[2]

[1] *Abdal*, mystical officers of the Divine court; *see* p. 40, *supra*. The use of these Sufi terms shows a deep sufi influence on Namdeva.

[2] M.A. Macauliffe, *The Sikh religion*, VI, Oxford, 1909, pp. 69-70.

The traditions established by Ramanuja were put on a firm basis by Ramananda (*c.* 1360–1470). During his lifetime Ramananda travelled all over India spending some time teaching in Banaras and Agra. He advocated devotion to the incarnation of Vishnu in the form of Rama, and of his consort Sita. His disciples belonged both to the Vaishnavite and *Nirguna Bhakti* north Indian *sant* (Hindu saint) traditions. His influence was far-reaching and he helped to establish Ramanuja's system of *visisht-advaita* as a significant force in Indian classical philosophy and as an important influence amongst the many emerging *Bhakti* cults.

The most prominent of Bengali Vaishnavites was Chaitanya (1485–1534), a native of Navadvipa (Nadia). Chaitanya believed that knowledge, meditation, charity and virtue should be subordinated to the devotion of Krishna and Radha. His favourite form of worship as a *bhakta* was in *kirtan* or *samkirtan* (group singing) which was accompanied by drums, cymbals or a one-stringed fiddle and during which the words Hari and Krishna were constantly chanted. Chandidas[1] (*c.* 1350–1430), and other Vaishnavite poets preceding Chaitanya identified themselves with the Shaktis or female companions of Krishna. Chaitanya became even more radical by personally identifying himself with Radha and her love for Krishna, which gradually came to symbolize the search of the soul for God. Chaitanya's emotional attachment to Krishna led to prolonged spells of ecstasy and epileptic fits.

A theory called *achintya bhedabheda* (incomprehensible dualistic monism) was developed by Chaitanya to express the relationship between God and the soul and he drew the analogy of the connection between fire and a simple spark which neither were identical nor different. Chaitanya's followers defined their goal this way:

> 'At the mention of the word *sayujya* (loss of identity) the *bhakta* (believer) feels fear. He prefers hell to it. At the word *mukti* (redemption) hatred arises in the mind. But at the word *Bhakti* (devotion) he feels only joy.'[2]

Like the Alvars, Chaitanya was opposed to class distinctions, but his followers allowed the practice to creep back into the movement. They not only worshipped Vishnu, Krishna and Radha, but also relics associated with their founder.

A modern Muslim scholar who appears not to be conversant with the different forms of *Bhakti* argues that Chaitanya was influenced by Shaikh Nur Qutb-i 'Alam.[3] There would seem to be little in common

[1] A Bengali *Shakta* poet.

[2] *Hindu world*, I, p. 216.

[3] K.A. Nizami, *Tarikh-i Masha'ikh-i Chisht*, Delhi, 1953, p. 202. A.K. Majumdar rightly comments on Nizami's conclusions (in a different work) as follows: "Probably never before in the long history of Hinduism, religious leaders had sprung from those strata of society to

with the puritanical Vaishnavism of Chaitanya and his followers and sufis such as Nur Qutb-i 'Alam and his *khalifas*. However, the deep impact made by Chaitanya was felt on a more popular level, for example in the Baul movement.

The Bauls were a popular group of Muslim and Hindu singers in Bengal who used mainly songs in the tradition of Chaitanya. The Muslim Bauls followed sufi traditions while the Hindu Bauls were Vaishnavites. The movement began in Nadia from where it spread to all parts of Bengal. Among the beliefs of the Hindu Bauls was that Bhirbhadra, a son of Nityananda (1473–1544) was their first *guru* and received the Baul faith from a Muslim woman called Madhava Bibi. But the beginnings of the movement are as shrouded in mystery as is the origin of the word Baul. The Sanskrit words *vatula* (affected by wind-disease, that is, crazy) and *vyakula* (impatiently eager) are suggested as possible roots of the word. A Hindi variation, *baur*[1] (also meaning crazy) has been suggested, as a closer Hindi equivalent *baula*, with the same translation. All these words are compatible both with the poetry of the Bauls and their philosophy of life. They borrowed ideas from the Vaishnava Sahajiyas who preferred to achieve the state of *sahaja* (the ultimate nature of the self) not through yogic practices but by a process of the divinization of human love, as represented in the Radha/Krishna union.

Both the Vaishnavite and sufi Bauls were regarded as 'Men of the Hearts.' They were non-dualistic, conceiving the body as the microcosm of the universe. A Baul poet wrote:

> '"The Man of the house is dwelling in the house,—in vain have you become mad by searching Him outside. It is . . . your own fault that you are roaming about for ever. You have been to Gaya, Benares (Kasi) and Vrndavana,—and have travelled through many rivers and forests and other places of pilgrimage; but say,—have you seen in all these anything of Him of Whom you have heard? Through false illusion you have lost all your power of understanding,—with jewel tied in your own skirt, you have been swimming in search of it. With care you might have easily got the gem,—but you are losing everything carelessly,—the jewel shines so near to

which Caitanya, Kabir. . . belonged. There was hardly any saint of the *bhakti* school who had not passed some of his time in a khanqah." K.A. Nizami, *Some aspects of religion and politics in India during the 13th century*, p. 264. We would be happy if such a state of affairs existed in that age, but the evidence is nil, and so is the probability from the evidence we have just cited. For an account of the Hindu attitude of food touched by Muslims, *see* the story of Subuddhi Roy, *Krishna-das-Kaviraj*, II, XXV, 139-67. Dr. Nizami is also wrong about Caitanya's social position.' Majumdar's only mistake is in referring to Nizami as 'Dr.' A.K. Majumdar, *Caitanya: his life and doctrine, a study in Vaishnavism*, Bombay, 1969, p. 214, f.n. 4.

[1] *Obscure religious cults*, p. 161.

> your eyes, but alas! you are keeping your eyes shut—and you do not see.'''[1]

The popularity of Vaishnavite themes used in sufi *sama'* rituals of Hindi speaking regions is a most remarkable development. The sufis regarded them as welcome additions to their devotional poetry to induce ecstasy. In 1566 Mir 'Abdu'l-Wahid Bilgarami compiled a Persian dictionary of Hindi songs which had been well-known to sufis giving prominence to those known by Vaishnavites. The work is entitled the *Haqa'iq-i Hindi* and is divided into three sections. The first section gives a mystic explanation of Hindi words used in *Dhurpad*[2] songs. The second section allegorically explains the words used in Vaishnavite songs in Braj Bhasha, the dialects of the Mathura region.[3] The Mir justifies the popularity of the names of *kafirs* used in sufi *sama'* on the grounds that the Qur'an itself uses the names of both *kafirs* and enemies. The third section gives the sufi explanation of the words used in Hindi sufi poetry.

It was not, however, only to satisfy the orthodox that the need for an explanation of Hindi terms was felt. The sufis used even Arabic and Persian words in a mystical and technical sense which was vastly different from common usage. Several dictionaries of sufi technical terms were written. The ancient Indian mystics such as the Sahajiyas, Tantrics and the Nath-Yogis also compiled dictionaries of their own mystical and technical terms. Nabhaji, the author of the *Bhagat Mal*, the celebrated biographical dictionary of the *sants* written at the end of the sixteenth century also thought it appropriate to explain allegorically the *Gita-Govinda*. He wrote:

> '. . . the love scenes and rhetorical graces of the poet are not to be understood in the sense that persons of evil minds and dispositions attach to them. Radhika the heroine is heavenly wisdom. The milkmaids who divert Krishan from his allegiance to her, are the senses of smell, sight, touch, taste and hearing. Krishan represented as pursuing them is the human soul, which attaches itself to earthly pleasures. The return of Krishan to his first love is the return of the repentant sinner to God, which gives joy in heaven.'[4]

The *Haqa'iq-i Hindi* of Mir 'Abdu'l-Wahid Bilgarami, was therefore written in the same tradition. An explanation by Mir 'Abdu'l-Wahid about the Krishna theme is as follows:

[1] *Obscure religious cults*, p. 174.

[2] A kind of musical note.

[3] The author calls them *Vishnu-Pad*, but Rudr Kashike says that he was not aware of the *Vishnu Padhati* (style) in Hindi music. Introduction to the author's Hindi translation of the *Haqa'iq-i Hindi*, Kashi, 1957, p. 19. Sufi literature includes numerous references to the *Vishnu-Pad*.

[4] Macauliffe, VI, p. 10.

Krishna: Sometimes Krishna and his other names in Hindawi (Hindi) indicate the Prophet Muhammad and sometimes the (Perfect) Man. Often it indicates the Reality of the creation of man which is related to the Unity of Being. Sometimes it represents *Iblis*.[1] Often it stands for idols, Christians or the sons of fire-worshippers, as the following lines indicate:

> Idol and Christian-boy represent manifestations of divine light which illuminate beautiful faces.
> This light which illuminates beautiful faces gives rest to the heart; sometimes it is epitomized in a singer and sometimes in the *saqi* (cup bearer).[2]

Gopi and Gujari (milkmaid): Sometimes these words represent angels; sometimes they indicate the reality of mankind in relation to the Unity of Being. If wise men perceive into them a different meaning, the source of difference is the intellect itself. The symbols themselves do not warrant any difference. For example once Shibli[3] recited the following verse:

> "I ask about 'Salma' but none in the world answers me."

It is evident that 'Salma' in the above verse indicates a woman but to Shibli she meant God. The sufis use several such symbols and give innumerable reasons for their allegorical interpretations.

Kubrhi or *Kubija* (Hunch-backed Woman): These words indicate human beings and their faults.

Uddhava (A companion and relation of Krishna): Sometimes it indicates the Prophet Muhammad, sometimes it indicates his followers who are intermediaries between him and God. Sometimes it indicates Gabriel.

Patiya (sent): Sometimes it indicates divine books, and sometimes it stands for the book of mankind's deeds, believed to have been maintained by observing angels and to be produced on the Day of Judgment. Sometimes it indicates the divine command censuring men for being engrossed in the thoughts of pleasures of heaven and forgetting the vision of God. Sometimes it indicates the universe which is a compendium of Essence and manifestations. In fact this in itself is the divine book.

> *Verse*
> One whose soul rests in the divine light,
> considers the entire universe as a divine book.
> The vowels and diacritical marks and punctuations and pauses in this book are the manifestation of the divine.

[1]*Iblis* is the devil. Many sufis ascribe his disobedience against the divine command to his unflinching adherence to the Unity of God.

[2]*Haqa'iq-i Hindi*; p. 73.

[3]Chapter One, pp. 58-9, *supra*.

Each page of the book of the universe is a volume of *Ma'rifa*.

Verse
Consider esoteric and exoteric as the embodiment of Being and all objects in the universe (such) as the Qur'an and its verses.
Sometimes this word symbolized those hearts which are steadfast in faith.

Braj and *Gokul* (regions of Mathura associated with Krishna's life). These words stand for the three ontological dominations of the *Jabarut*, representing the highest point in the spiritual world; the *nasut* or physical world, and the *Malakut* or intermediary psychic world.

The Jamuna, Ganga or Kalindi (rivers): Sometimes these indicate the river of the *Wahdat*, sometimes the ocean of *Ma'rifa*, sometimes the streams of creation or contingent existence. Truly all contingent existences are like waves and canals.

Murli or *Bansuri* (flute): This indicates the appearance of existence out of the void.

Verse
The entire world is the humming of His song.
None has heard such a prolonged voice.

It also points to the contents of the Qur'anic verse: "... and breathed into him (Adam) of My Spirit"[1] and the divine command in the *Qur'an* namely "Be."[2]

Verse
The world of creation and command emanates from a breath. This breath is ephemeral.
Both worlds were created from the breath; the existence of Adam also took place from the breath.
Breath is melody.

It does not contain any letter,
sound or pulling and breathing.
There is no sound or letter in the song of spirit;
a unique mystery is concealed in it.

Kans: Sometimes the name symbolizes the *nafs*, sometimes the devil, sometimes it indicates the aspects of the names of Allah related to His Majesty and Power. Sometimes the name may indicate the *Shari'a* of the prophets prior to the advent of Muhammad.

[1] *Qur'an*, XXXVIII, 73.
[2] *Qur'an*, II, 117.

Mathura: This indicates the temporary stations in the *Ma'rifa* which are related to *nasut.* The permanent stations are *Malakut* or *Jabarut.* Starting from the temporary stations, the sufi journey leads to the permanent stations. The sufis accordingly say that one who is not born twice does not enter the loftiest of spiritual stages.

Dwarika: This is the permanent station of sufis. The knowledge and ascetic exercises of perfect sufis carry them to permanent stations. This is the *ma'ad* or ultimate state of mystics.

Jasodha (Yashoda, mother of Krishna): This indicates divine mercy which God has promised to the worldly.[1]

The author of this unique dictionary, Mir 'Abdu'l-Wahid was born in *c.* 915/1509–10. He belonged to the family of eminent sufis from Bilgaram in Hardoi, near Lucknow. He was married in Kanauj where he remained for many years. Mulla 'Abdu'l-Qadir who met the Mir in 977/1569–70, latter indulged in ecstatic exercises and songs to induce trance-like states. At Akbar's invitation, he visited the Emperor's court and received a huge grant from him for his living expenses. The Mir died on 3 Ramazan 1017/11 December 1608.[2]

Mir 'Abdu'l-Wahid's Persian work *Saba'-i Sanabil* is a very famous treatise on sufi doctrines and ethics. Written in 969/1562, it included many Hindi quotations. The Mir also wrote another short treatise on sufism entitled the *Kalimat-i Chand.* A commentary on the *Nuzhatu'l Arwah* of Fakhr-i Sadat Husaini, compiled by the Mir and mentioned by Bada'uni, has not survived. Some works mentioned by Mir Ghulam 'Ali Azad Bilgarami, such as a tale of four brothers, the *Qissa-i Chahar Baradar*, and a commentary on the technical terms of the Persian sufi poet Khwaja Hafiz (*c.* 1325–89) have also not been traced. A collection of the Mir's *ghazals* is available in the Aligarh University Library. His verses lack the lyrical impact of Hafiz and in some of them, the mysticism is rather laboured. The Mir claimed that in a vision the Khwaja had made him his disciple.

Much better understood and more widely known than the above work by Mir 'Abdu'l-Wahid is the Hindi sufi poetry modelled on the Persian *masnawis* of Nizami Ganjawi. The *masnawis* of the great sufi poets, Sana'i, 'Attar and Rumi mentioned earlier, were characterized by a much greater degree of ecstasy and intense emotion expressed through the use of anecdotes than the poems of Nizami. Ilyas bin Yusuf Nizami of Ganja also began writing a collection of five epics (*Khamsa*) along the lines of Sana'i's *masnawis*, a trend which he continued in the *Makhzanu'l-Asrar* (Treasure Chamber of Mysteries). Soon, however, he realized that parables and allegories did not offer him enough scope for lyrical artistry.

[1] *Haqa'iq-i Hindi*, pp. 73-85.

[2] *Muntakhabu't-Tawarikh*, III, p. 66; Ghulam 'Ali Azad Bilgarami, *Ma'asiru'l-Kiram*, I, Agra, 1889, pp. 36-51.

He then decided to relate the adventures of the Sasanian king Khusraw Parviz (AD 591–628), his amours with the beautiful Shirin and the fate of his rival Farhad. The work took four years between 573–6/1177–81 to complete. The success of this *masnawi* prompted him to write the Arabian folk story the *Laili-u-Majnun*; later he produced the *Haft-Paikar* (Seven Portraits). The hero of this *masnawi* was again the Sasanian king Bahram Gur (AD 421–39).

> 'The Seven Portraits in question, discovered by Bahram one day in a secret chamber in his castle... represented seven princesses of incomparable beauty,... Bahram falls in love with these portraits, and, succeeding almost immediately afterwards to the throne vacated by the death of his father... he demands and obtains these seven princesses in marriage from their respective fathers. Each one, representing one of the Seven Climes... is lodged in a separate palace... and Bahram visits each of them on seven successive nights.... Each of the seven princesses entertains him in turn with stories, somewhat after the scheme of the Arabian Nights...'[1]

The last of Ilyas bin Yusuf Nizami's epics was a poem of the Islamic legend of Alexander the Great, which was written with excessive poetical and philosophical depth.

The Persian poets left no stone unturned to imitate Nizami but even the great Amir Khusraw was no match for him. Only Faizi (1547–95), succeeded in matching Nizami's genius by selecting the Indian romantic theme surrounding the love of Raja Nal for his beloved Damyanti. From the fourteenth century the sufi poets who chose Indian themes and wrote *masnawis* in Hindi and other regional languages were prompted to do this because such themes offered them wide opportunities to express their thoughts on mysticism. Indian imagery and symbolism were not only new but were also artistic. The success of Nakhshabi's Persian *Tuti Nama* was a further incentive to them. Non-Indian sufis of the early centuries of Islam did not hesitate to learn lessons from the Magian and Manichaean interaction of Being and non-Being where the Phenomenal World emanated and also from the Christian Trinity typifying the Light of Being, the Mirror of the purified Human soul and the rays of the divine outpouring. They were impressed with the Buddhist *nirvana* as well as with the enthusiasm for their idols. They believed in the well-known sufi saying *al-majazu quntartu'l Haqiqa* (the phantasmal is the bridge to the Real). To them earthly beauty was a mere reflection of Eternal Beauty, which appeared in thousands of mirrors, but which essentially was One. Centuries earlier Amir Khusraw reminded sufis:

> 'Khusraw, in love rival the Hindu wife,
> For the dead's sake she burns herself in life.'

[1] *Literary history of Persia*, II, p. 409.

The motive of these sufi poets who wrote Hindi *masnawis* was to arouse indescribable ecstasy both in themselves and in others thus obliterating the distinction between 'Thou' and 'I.' Their writings were not designed to fulfil a missionary aim, as some admirers have suggested. The works based on the model of Persian *masnawis* always began with verses of gratitude to Allah, followed by praise for Muhammad and his companions, the reigning monarch and lastly tributes to the particular *pir*. Then the tale was related effusively but with great fervour.

The earliest known *masnawi* written in Hindi is the *Chanda'in* of Maulana Dawud, popularly known as Mulla Dawud. He came from Dalmau in the Rae Bareli district, near Lucknow and was a *khalifa* of Shaikh Zainu'd-Din who in turn was the son of the sister of Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Chiragh-i Dihli and his uncle's *khalifa*. Probably the work was started in 772/1370–71 and completed in 781/1379–80. Mulla 'Abdu'l-Qadir Bada'uni says:

> 'In 772H/1370 Khan-i Jahan, the *wazir*, died; and his son Juna obtained that title. Maulana Dawud, wrote in his honour *Chanda'in*, a *masnawi* in Hindawi, relating the story of the love of Lorak and Chanda. It is a very touching piece indeed, and too well-known to need praise. Even Maulana Shaikh Taqiu'd-Din, a godly preacher (*wa'iz-i rabbani*) used to recite its verses from the pulpit. It had an indescribable ecstatic effect upon the audience. When certain learned men asked the Shaikh why he chose that *masnawi* for his discourses, he replied, 'the whole of it is divine truth and is not only agreeable to the taste of people who are interested in divine Love, but it is compatible with the interpretation of some verses of the Qur'an. Even now sweet-singers of India captivate the heart by reciting it.'[1]

The story is based on a Dalmau folk tale. The heroine of the *masnawi* lived in Gobargarh and was married as a child of four. At twelve a beggar-bard chanced to see her. So enchanted with her beauty was he that he composed songs lamenting the fact that he could no longer see her. At the court of the Raja of Rajapur the bard's songs of Chanda's beauty so inspired the monarch that he invaded Gobargarh. Chanda's father invited Laurik Vir, a neighbouring raja to Gobargarh's assistance. Rup Chand was defeated but the victor and Chanda fell in love. Leaving his wife, Laurik Vir and Chanda remained together until the news of his wife's intense anguish forced him to return.

The most fascinating portions of the *masnawi* are the *nakh-shikh* (top to toe) description of Chanda given by the bard at the Raja's court. Maulana Dawud sees the eye-brows of Arjuna in the heavens but finds those of Chanda even more beautiful. As she walks, men prostrate themselves before her only to find their sins washed away. Rishis and

[1] *Muntakhabu't-Tawarikh*, I, p. 250.

gods such as Indra, Brahma, Vishnu, Murari and Gandharva are enchanted by her.

The *nakh-shikh* of the *Chanda'in* made a deep impact on later writers of Hindi *masnawis* and were reproduced chiefly because of the great prestige of its author as a mystic. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus, in a letter to Shaikh Jalal Thaneswari on the *Wahdat-al Wujud*, quoted a *doha* from the *Chanda'in* to prove that although lovers sought to meet their beloveds, they were always thwarted. The *doha*[1] is immediately followed by lines from a verse from the Qur'an in which Moses urges God to reveal Himself but his request is rejected on the grounds that it was impossible for Moses to see his Creator. In the sufi path, *Arani*[2] and *Lan Tarani*[3] represented constant conflict between the devotee, who wished to see the divine vision, and God.[4] In another letter to Shah Muhammad about the spiritual ambitions of holy men, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus argued, using for emphasis a *doha* from the *Chanda'in*, that only the spiritually adventurous were real men.[5]

It is interesting that Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus lectured on the *Chanda'in* with the same intensity as when he lectured on the works of Ibn al-'Arabi, Fakhru'd-Din 'Iraqi and Sa'di. As pointed out earlier, his Persian translation of the *Chanda'in* was not available even to his son but three verses of the Persian translation that Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din was able to quote, indicate the extent to which the *Chanda'in* could be reconciled with Persian ideas on mysticism.

The verses translated by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus refer to Bajir's sighting of Chanda for the first time. The Persian translation allegorically describes Chanda as a piece of unreachable fruit.

'A fruit is seen in the heavens on a lofty tree
Our hands cannot hope to reach it.
Anyone who is able to extend his hands high,
How can he touch the branches of that heavenly tree.

[1] बिनु करिया मोरि डोलइ नावा ।
नयन कथार (?) कंत नहि आवा ॥

[2] Moses' request to see God.

[3] God's rejection. The words occur in the following verse from Chapter VII of the *Qur'an*, the greater part of which deals with the history of Moses and the Israelites. In verse 43 they are as follows:

'And when Moses came to Our appointed tryst and his Lord had spoken unto him, he said: My Lord! Show me (Thy self), that I may gaze upon Thee. He said: Thou wilt not see Me, but gaze upon the mountain! If it stand still in its place, then thou wilt see me. And when his Lord revealed (His) glory to the mountain He sent it crashing down. And Moses fell down senseless and when he woke he said: Glory unto Thee! I turn unto Thee repentant, and I am the first of (the true) believers.'

[4] *Maktubat-i Quddusiyya*, p. 309.

[5] ibid, pp. 173-74.

There are lots of people to guard the fruit throughout the day and night
He who tries even to look at it is likely to be killed.'[1]

The analogy is subtle: Mystics get a glimpse of the Supreme but God Himself is beyond their reach.

Like the story of *Chanda'in*, that of *Mrigawati* is also based on local folklore. It revolves round an Elysian beauty Mrigawati. Below is a general outline of the story.

Ganpati, the raja of Chandragiri, was finally blessed with a son because of his great generosity. The child was named Raj Kunwar. Learned at the age of ten, he was devoted to hunting. Once, chasing a doe, he became separated from his companions. Reaching a lake the doe disappeared into the forest. Raj Kunwar, who had fallen in love with the doe, waited for many months but she never re-appeared. The love-lorn prince was miserable, so his father constructed a temple near the lake in which the prince could live. One day seven fairies came to bathe in the lake; one of them was called Mrigawati. An old woman told the Prince how to lure Mrigawati away from her companions and while she bathed, he stole her clothes. The Prince refused to return them saying that he had waited two years for her, to which she replied that she had disguised herself as a doe to catch his eye. The two were married in the temple.

The Prince went to visit his father and to test his love Mrigawati donned the clothes which had been stolen and disappeared. Heartbroken the Prince became a yogi and after a hazardous journey found his wife at Kandrapur, her home town. Finally the Prince returned to Chandragiri to comfort his lonely father and died after falling from an elephant after a hunting expedition. Mrigawati and Princess Rukmani, who had married the Prince during Mrigawati's absence, became *satis* by throwing themselves on their husband's funeral pyre.

The introduction gives a direct and more detailed description of sufi ideas. On the analogy that the painting should arouse interest in the painter, it suggests and promises that a genuine searcher will inevitably reach God. Mrigawati is the reflection of Eternal Beauty and the symbol of divine. A true understanding of Beauty is enjoyed by one who is prepared to become self annihilated and to see the beloved through love. Love is the embodiment of affliction and only the stupid anticipate an eternity of happiness in love.

Like other sufis the author, Shaikh Qutb 'Ali Qutban, describes the Essence as Light and using Hindu terminology he calls Him *Niranjan*,

[1]*Lata'if-i Quddusi*, p. 100; Mataprasad Gupta, ed. *Chanda'in*, p. 14.

ऊँच बिरिख फरु लाग अकासा । हाथ चढ़ै कइ नाहीं आसा ॥
कहु जोगत को बाहँ पसारै । तरुवर डाल छुवै को पारै ॥
राती दिवस बहुत रखवारा । नयन देख जाइ सो मारा ॥

Kratar, Vidhata, Pramesh, Ek-Onkar, Alakh. Defining Muhammad as the cause of creation, the author draws on the concept of Shiva and Shakti as two bodies.

The Shaikh was the disciple of Makhdum Shaikh Budhan, in turn the disciple of Shaikh Muhammad Isa Taj of Jaunpur. Although Shaikh Isa Taj was a distinguished Chishti, Shaikh Budhan seems to have been initiated into both the Chishtiyya and Suhrawardiyya orders. Qutban preferred to call himself a Suhrawardi. According to Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus both Shaikh Buddhan and Shaikh 'Isa Taj were revered personalities, expert in the interpretation of dreams. Qutban's patron was Sultan Husain Shah Sharqi of Jaunpur whom he considered to be a great and generous king, and a wise and learned man. Qutban completed his *masnawi* in Muharram 909/June-July 1503, after working on it for just over two months. At the time Sultan Husain lived as a dethroned refugee in Kahalgaon in Bengal, and continued to issue coins like a ruler. The loyal Qutban had not lost hope of his master regaining the throne and wrote of him as if he were still a reigning monarch. Some scholars suggest that Qutban also retired to Bengal with his master, although the paucity of evidence would make such assertion difficult to sustain.[1]

Unlike the *Chanda'in* or *Mrigawati*, the story of the *Padumavati* by Malik Muhammad Ja'isi is based on the bardic songs of Rajasthan. The work begins with an invocation in traditional sufi style to God, Muhammad and his companions, then it mentions Sher Shah (1539–45) as the ruling king, introduces the author's *pirs* and then states that the poet commenced the work in 947/1540–41. The story, summed up by Ja'isi himself, is as follows.

Queen Padmini or Padumavati came from Simhala-dvipa (Ceylon or Sri Lanka). She was taken from there by Ratna-Sena to his Chitor Fort. At the time 'Ala'u'd-Din (Khalji) was the Sultan of Delhi. Raghava-Chaitan (an exiled Brahman from Chitor) told the Sultan of Padmini's enchanting beauty. The Sultan proceeded to lay siege to Chitor and this led to a war between the Hindus and the Turks.

The story is divided into two parts. The first deals with Simhala-dvipa, the birth of Padumavati and her love for her parrot, Hiramani, and the birth of Ratna-Sena at Chitor. A Brahman accompanied by a merchant from Chitor goes to Simhala-dvipa where he buys the parrot who had been taken from Padumavati and had fallen into the hands of fowlers. The Brahman returns to Chitor where Ratna-Sena who had succeeded his father buys the parrot. One day in Ratna-Sena's absence, the parrot arouses the jealousy of his chief queen Nagamati by praising Padumavati's beauty. So incensed is the queen that she orders her maid-servant to kill the parrot, but the latter decides to spare the bird's life by concealing it. To her husband the Queen reports that the parrot has been killed by a

[1]S.H. Askari, 'Qutban's Mrigarat,' *Journal of the Bihar research society*, 1955, pp. 452-87.

cat, but the fury of the king prompts her maid-servant to restore the parrot. Again the parrot relates the loveliness of his former mistress and the king, not being able to live without Padumavati, relinquishes his throne to become a yogi. Taking the parrot with him, after a long and hazardous journey he reaches Simhala-dvipa. The parrot visits Padumavati and through the power of the king's austerities she falls in love with him. Although nine Naths and eighty-four Siddhas also assist Ratna-Sena in his pursuit, in reality it is the parrot's efforts which enable him to marry Padumavati.

The second part of the work deals with Ratna-Sena's return to Chitor with Padumavati. There he banishes Raghava-Chaitan who immediately goes to Sultan 'Ala'u'd-Din Khalji and arouses his interest in the beauteous Padumavati. He invades Chitor, seizes Ratna-Sena and has him imprisoned in Delhi. Padumavati appeals to Gora and Badal, two Kshatriyas to help release Ratna-Sena. Accompanied by an army the two invade Delhi and liberate Ratna-Sena. Gora is killed but Badal returns to Chitor with Ratna-Sena. Shortly afterwards Ratna-Sena is killed in a battle against a Rajput chief. As in the *Chanda'in*, the two widows, Padumavati and Nagmati, immolate themselves on their husband's pyre.

It was not only that Ratna-Sena became a yogi in the *Padumavati* which prompted Ja'isi to describe Nath beliefs and practices but his own deep interest in Naths. The author describes a number of other situations in a way which can only be meaningfully interpreted in the light of the traditions and customs of Naths and sufis. One such example is the comparison of Simhala-dvipa with Sumeru, the mythical peak around which all the heavenly bodies revolve. Ja'isi goes on to say:

> 'The sun and moon (cannot go over Simhala-dvipa Fort but) make a circuit round it, or else the steeds and their chariots would be broken into dust. The nine gate-ways are fortified with adamant, and a thousand thousand foot soldiers sit at each. Five captains of the guard go round their watch, and the gate-ways tremble at the trampling of their feet. At each gate-way of the fort is a molten image of a lion, filling the hearts of kings with fear. With great ingenuity were these lions cast, in attitude as if roaring and about to leap upon thy head. With lolling tongue they lash their tails. Elephants are filled with terror at them, lest they should fall upon them with a roar. A staircase fashioned of gold and lapis lazuli leadeth up into the castle, which shineth above, up to the very sky.'[1]

According to Nath esoteric practices, the human body is a fort in its own right. There the sun (Shakti) and the moon (Shiva) exist separately, but finally their union leads to a state of bliss. The nine *cakras* are impreg-

[1]A.G. Shirreff, *Padmavati*, Calcutta, 1944, p. 32.



Babur visiting Gorkhattri
From *Babur Nama* in British Museum; XVI century.

nable because of thousands and thousands of evils which surround them. Five calamities, acting as guards, prevent the yogis from obtaining control over the *cakras*. Yogic exercises are exceedingly difficult and call for great caution. Each *cakra* is controlled by a goddess who is guarded by a lion, who refuses to allow the yogis to penetrate the *cakras*. Elephants representing ignorance are frightened by the lions. The golden staircase is *Susumna-nadi* (literally vessels, here meaning nerve) whose substance is the three-fold gunas, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* which respectively produce virtue, passion and dullness, and whose form is the moon, sun and fire.

Yogic obstacles and stages correspond with those along the sufi path. They are numbered differently; the four stages of the sufi journey are *nasut*, *Malakut*, *Jabarut* and *Lahut*. According to the sufis of Ibn al-'Arabi's school, *nasut* (human nature) is like a vessel which contains the *Lahut* (Divine Nature).

In the *Padumavati* Jai'si gives an interesting list of objects needed to complete the outer appearance of a yogi. But through the parrot, Jai'si warns Ratna-Sena of the difficulties of the life of a real yogi. The parrot says:

> 'But what is the use of telling the tale of Yoga; *Ghee* (butter clarified) is not produced without churning curds. So long as a man does not lose himself, so long will he not attain what he seeks. God has made the mountain of love difficult of access: only he can ascend it who climbs with his head. On that path the sharp point of a stake arises: a thief will be impaled thereon, or a *Mansur* (Hallaj). You are a King: why should you clothe yourself in rags? You have the ten ways at home (that is, in your body). Lust, anger, greed, pride and delusion, these five thieves never leave your body. They are looking out for the nine entrances, and will rob your house by night or by day.
> Awake now, O senseless one, the night is becoming dawn. Nothing will come to your hand when these thieves have robbed you.'[1]

Ja'isi says that a yogi becomes a Siddha only after meeting Gorakh, a counterpart of the Mahdi. Both Gorakh and Siddhas exhibit the distinctive features of the Mahdi.

> 'The Siddha is one on whose limbs flies do not settle: the Siddha does not close his eyes for an instant. The Siddha is one who is not attended by a shadow: The Siddha is one who feels neither hunger nor confusion of thought. He whom the Lord has made a Siddha in this world, none can recognise him whether he be revealed or disguised.'[2]

[1]A.G. Shirreff, *Padmavati*, Calcutta, 1944, p. 86.
[2]ibid, p. 133.

Malik Muhammad Ja'isi was also known as Muhaqqiq-i Hind (Researcher of Indian Truth). Born in 900/1494–95 he began to write good poetry at thirty. *Padumavati*, begun in 927H/1520–21 was a preliminary literary exercise by its author, who finally took it up seriously in the reign of Sher Shah completing it in 1540. Ja'isi also wrote the *Akhiri-Kalam* in Babur's reign and another work the *Akhravat* apparently before the *Padumavati*. His other works in Hindi are the *Kanhavat*, the *Kahra-Nama*, *Pusti-Nama* and *Holi-Nama* and other *Sorathas*[1] which are still unfounded. A Hindi *masnawi* entitled *Chitra-Rekha* which is not mentioned in the *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat* has been published. In his *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, Qasuri reproduces a number of *Sorathas* from the *Akhravat* and explains them on the basis of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. For example he quotes the following *Soratha* in Persian script and then explains it this way:

Soratha

'Sa'in Kera Nav Hien Pur, Kaya Bhari,
Muhammad Raha na Thanv,
dusar kahan sama'i-ab.'[2]

Explanation

The name Khundawand Ta'ala (God Most High) indicates one of His holy names. God combines within Himself all aspects of negation and affirmation. His name is one of the Beautiful Names (of Allah). It has rendered the heart accomplished and the physical being is filled with the Name. The poet Muhammad says that in his physical being there is no place where the name of Khundawand Ta'ala has not penetrated. There is no place for anything else in his heart. Not only heart and body are filled with the name of God; there is no place in the world which is not filled with His name. Anything other than God cannot be conceived anywhere in the world, in the heart or in the body

I became you, You became I; I became body,
You became spirit.
So that from now none is able to say I and You
are separate.[3]

Like some other members of the Chishti order, Malik Muhammad Ja'isi, also became a Mahdawi[4] under the influence of his Mahdawi *pir*, Shaikh Burhan of Kalpi. Shaikh Burhan wrote Hindi poetry of a highly

[1]The name of a metre used in Hindi poetry.

[2]Slight variation in the reading of the *Akhravat*, Mataprasad Gupta, *Ja'isi Granthawali*, Allahabad, 1951, p. 654.

[3]*Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, ff. 341b-342a.

[4]*Muslim revivalist movements in northern India*, pp. 131-33, 273.

ecstatic nature. Although his works are lost, he gave Ja'isi a taste for Hindi poetry which helped immortalize the works of his disciple. According to the *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, Ja'isi lived until the reign of Akbar. It would seem he died sometime at the end of that period.

Shortly after the completion of *Padumavati*, Manjhan's *Madhumalti* was written. We shall be discussing Manjhan in the next volume. The traditions of the Hindi sufi poets continued into the seventeenth century. Some eminent Hindi poets, such as 'Usman, the author of the *Chitravali*, in 1022/1613–14 and Shaikh Nabi in 1023/1614–15 wrote *Gyandip*.

Aesthetic sensitivity and taste combined with literary skill were a feature of seventeenth century Bengali poets who were patronized at the Arakanese court. They used these qualities to present such themes as those contained in the *Chanda'in* and the *Padumavati*, *Satimaina Lor-Chandrani*[1] was begun on the model of the *Chanda'in*. Daulat Qazi, its author, was lucky enough to have a prominent patron, Ashraf Khan, the *laskkar wazir* (war minister) of the Arakanese king, Thiri Thudamma Raja (1622–38).

Daulat Qazi was unable to complete the *Satimaina Lor-Chandrani* and the task fell to the celebrated Muslim Bengali poet, Alaol, a resident of the Arakanese court, after a request by Srimat Sulaiman, a minister of the Arakanese king, Thanda Thudamma (1652–84). Alaol's masterpiece, however, was a Bengali version of the *Padmavati* which the poet composed in 1651 at the insistence of Magan Thakur, the prime minister of the Arakanese King, Thado Mintari Sad Umangdar (1645–52).

A distinctive contribution by the Bengali sufi poets was the creation of a corpus of mystical poetry based on Persian mystical *masnawis*. Their models were Nizami Ganjawi and Nuru'd-Din 'Abdu'r-Rahman Jami. The most popular theme was that featured in Jami's *Yusuf-Zulaykha* or the Romance of Yusuf (Joseph) and Zulaykha (Poliphar's Wife). The story based on the Yusuf chapter of the Qur'an had been written earlier in poetic form by Firdawsi[2] with great artistry. In Jami's hands it became a masterpiece of mystic poetry. The Bengali poets were to add their own delicate touches. 'Abdu'l-Hakim, the Bengali poet from Sandvip, wrote the *Yusuf-Zuleikha*. Gharibu'llah, a poet of the eighteenth century also composed another *Yusuf-Zuleikha*. Alaol, wrote the *Haft-Paikar* based on Nizami's famous *masnawi* as well as the Bengali *Sikandar-Nama*.

The theme of Muhammad's *Nur* (Light) gave great scope to Bengali Muslim poets in their expression of the mystic state. The *Nur-Nama* or the *Nur-Kandil* of Saiyid Murtaza,[3] the author of the *Yoga-Qalandar*, using Nath-sufi terminology presents Muhammad's light as the source of creation. The *Nur-Nama*[4] of Razzaq Nandan 'Abdu'l-Hakim is

[1] *Descriptive catalogue of Bengali manuscripts*, pp. 468-84, 486-89.
[2] *See* details in Rieu, II, pp. 545-46.
[3] *Descriptive catalogue of Bengali manuscripts*, p. 230.
[4] ibid, pp. 233-34.

similar in approach but militantly seeks to assert it is misguided to conceive that Bengali was one of the languages of Hindus.

In 1684 'Abdu'n-Nabi composed the *Dastan-i Amir Hamza*. Its hero was often confused with Hamza bin 'Abdu'l-Muttalib, the uncle of the Prophet. In reality he was the Irani adventurer Hamza who rebelled against Caliph Harun ar-Rashid. In legend his exploits are staged against such background as Ceylon, China, Central Asia and Turkey. The work was very popular at Akbar's court and became the theme for many paintings.

We have referred already to the *Nabi-Bangsa* of Saiyid Sultan. Many other Bengali poets also put into verse the legendary tales of the Prophets and apostles; one such poet was a protege of the Arakanese war minister, Ashraf Khan.

Rasti Khan, a disciple of Saiyid Sultan, chose for his Bengali poetry themes from the battle of Karbala. His *Maqtul Husain*[1] is based on the Persian stories of the martyrdom of Imam Husain. The *Hanifar-Larai*[2] narrates the legendary wars of Muhammad Hanifiyya, a son of 'Ali, the fourth Caliph, to avenge the cold-blooded murder of his brother, Imam Husain.

Saiyid Murtaza's *Kifayat-i Musallin*[3] is a theological work outlining rules for prayers. It is founded on the *Tuhfatu'n-Nasha'ih*, a didactic poem written by the sufi, Yusuf Gada,[4] Alaol also composed a Bengali translation in 1664. The author of the original work, Yusuf Gada, who completed it on 10 Rabi' II 795/23 February 1393 was a disciple of Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Chiragh-i Dihli. Yusuf Gada's poem was popular with both sufis and 'ulama' and was therefore a wise choice for a Bengali translation.

These spiritual trends and movements which we have discussed drew from each other both in a conscious and unconscious way; in general, however, they remained within a framework of their respective religious traditions. For example Muslims never subscribed to the Hindu belief in transmigration. Their main concern was with self-realization through Yoga or love or both, and this goal was realized differently according to the varying tenets of Islam and Hinduism.

An unending war against obstinate orthodoxy and meaningless ritualism was waged by the Hindu *bhaktas* or *sants* of the fifteenth and sixteenth century in the Hindi and Panjabi speaking regions of northern India. They were hostile to all idolatrous practices and caste distinctions and with equal vehemence ridiculed Muslim forms of worship. *Bhaktas* came from all classes of Hindu society, but their devotionalism was not concerned with any particular God or one of His incarnations. Their

[1] *Descriptive catalogue of Bengali manuscripts*, p. 138.
[2] ibid, pp. 265-66.
[3] ibid, pp. 53-60, 62-65.
[4] Ethé, nos. 1276-77.

mystical experience in local dialects was expressed in a lyrical form which showed little adherence to conventional literary traditions of Sanskrit. The *bhaktas* were filled with fervent and rapturous ideas of what they believed to be Reality or the Supreme.

The movement known as *Nirguna Bhakti* was founded on the movements which had begun with the Alvars and developed through the thoughts of the medieval religious reformer, Ramananda. In a verse, Kabir admitted that *Bhakti* had been born in the Deccan and brought to northern India by Ramananda. Although Kabir was not the founder of *Nirguna Bhakti* as such, he was the movement's earliest known exponent in medieval India which was to reach a climax with Guru Nanak.

In Hindu mystic tradition, the school was known as *Nirguna* (without attributes). *Nirguna bhaktas* were concerned mainly with self-purification and self-realization. The Nameless Supreme became the sole object of worship of the *Nirguna bhaktas*. The *Saguna bhaktas* worshipped Vishnu and his different *avatars* (incarnations).

Sufis considered Kabir to be a *muwahhid* (follower of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*). Once Shaikh Ruzqu'llah Mushtaqi (1491–*c.* 1581), asked his father, Shaikh Sa'du'llah (d. 928/1522), a contemporary of Kabir, whether the celebrated Kabir, whose *Bishunpads* were on everyone's lips, was a Muslim or a Kafir. The reply was that he was a *muwahhid*. The Shaikh then asked whether a *muwahhid* differed from both. Shaikh Sa'du'llah replied that the truth was difficult to understand and such knowledge could only be acquired gradually.[1]

The *A'in-i Akbari* mentions Kabir in connection with the history of Orissa and Awadh. In both states he is referred to as a *muwahhid*. At one place the author states that many subtle truths relating to his sayings and exploits were current among the people. Because of his catholicity of doctrine and charismatic personality he was a friend to both Hindus and Muslims.[2] At another place the author writes that Kabir Muwahhid lived during the reign of Sikandar Lodi.[3] Earlier Khwaja Ya'qub, a son of Baba Farid, defined a *muwahhid* as follows:

> 'The *muwahhid* is he whose main concern is good action. Whatever he does aims at seeking divine grace. Water does not drown him and fire doesn't burn him. Absorbed in *Tawhid* (*Wahdat al-Wujud*) he is in a state of self-effacement. A sufi or a lover belonging to this category is concerned with nothing. If he makes a quest for himself, he finds God, if he seeks God, he finds himself. When the lover is completely absorbed in the Beloved, the attributes of the lover and Beloved become identical.'[4]

[1] *AA*, p. 300.
[2] *A'in-i Akbari*, II, p. 53.
[3] ibid, p. 78.
[4] *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, f. 15a.

Factual details of Kabir's life and activities are few and far between. His followers and the authors of the biographical dictionaries of the *bhaktas*, the *Bhaktamal*, constructed his life story mainly from legends and his own verses, which had generally been intended to satisfy the thirst of the soul to attain the return to God from Whom it was separated. They were also a teaching device used to express beliefs. The *Dabistan-i Mazahib* gives Kabir's background according to the legends of the Vaishnavite *vairagis* (mendicants) with whom he was later identified.[1] The only reliable facts about his life are that he lived in Banaras about the fifteenth century and was a weaver. The earliest authentic collection of his hymns and *slokas* was compiled in the *Granth Sahib.* A number of eighteenth century painters made portraits of him according to suggestions from their patrons.

Some legends state Kabir was the illegitimate son of a Brahman widow. One version of the legend is that he was conceived by a widow because of Ramananda's blessings, and that, like Christ, this occurred without a natural father. In order to protect herself from public slander, the widow left her baby near a pond some way out of the city. A Muslim weaver called 'Ali, popularly known as Niru, saw the baby and being childless he and his wife Nima decided to adopt it as their own. This story is reminiscent of the adoption of Moses by the Pharoah's daughter after she had found him abandoned in the bulrushes. The local qazi gave the child the name Kabir. This story was an obvious invention and was an attempt to associate Kabir's parentage in some way with Hinduism. What is more probable is that Kabir was born into a Muslim family, the members of which were deeply imbued with Nath beliefs. That his parents' ancestors were yogis is not impossible. Of various dates for his birth 1425 is the most acceptable.

Considerable controversy surrounds the name of his *guru*. A *pir* called Pitambar has been suggested as the person who filled this role. A Hindi scholar identified Pitambar *Pir* with the Hindu god, Rama. According to the *Khazinatu'l-Asfiya'*, Kabir was the disciple of Shaikh Taqi. Shaikh Taqi of Kara Manikpur, also a weaver by trade, should not be identified as Kabir's *guru* for he was a disciple of Shaikh Salim Chishti (1479–1572). According to the *Khazinatu'l-Asfiya*, Shaikh Taqi died in 984/1576–77[2] and Kabir died in 1003/1594–95. Nothing can be said about the authenticity of Shaikh Taqi's date of death but that for Kabir is undoubtedly incorrect. Another Shaikh Taqi lived in Jhusi, near Allahabad, although nothing else is known of him.

According to Vaishnavite devotional traditions, Kabir was a disciple of Ramananda, however, legend fails to suggest he was formally initiated by the saint. Some authors imply that Kabir had no earthly *guru* and like a Uwaisi sufi, was mystically initiated by God. Kabir constantly travelled

[1] *Dabistan-i Mazahib*, p. 200.

[2] *Khazinatu'l-Asfiya'*, pp. 446-47.

around the Banaras area and was directly in contact with a number of eminent Hindu saints and sufis. It is not unlikely that he exchanged ideas with eminent sufis of Kara, Manikpur and Rudauli whose views on the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, expressed in Hindi, impressed Kabir.

The Hindi verses called *sakhis*, *dohas* and doctrinal poems, jointly known as *Ramai'ni*, form the majority of Kabir's poems. The most important of his verses were generally memorized by his disciples after they had been uttered, and then written down immediately or soon afterwards. This process gave rise to considerable interpolation and naturally many unauthentic verses are included. The verses in the *Adi Granth*, the *Kabir Granthawali* and the *Bijak* (Treasury) are the most reliable.

Kabir was married and although he was unhappy with his role as husband and father he preached neither renunciation nor celibacy. Throughout his life when he was not travelling he lived the traditional life of a married man. Before his death he is said to have migrated from Banaras to Maghar. Some authors suggest that Maghar was close to Banaras, others believe it was in the district of Basti, near Gorakhpur in U.P. The decision was deliberately taken by Kabir in order to belie the current Hindu belief that one who died in Maghar would return in a following life as an ass. Of the many dates given for Kabir's death 1505 is the most reliable.

After his death Kabir's body was claimed by both Muslims and Hindus, the former wishing to bury it and the latter to cremate it. When the door of the room where the dead body was lying was opened it was missing. According to tradition only a bunch of flowers was found under the sheet and these were divided amongst the two groups. The story undoubtedly owes much to the tale mentioned in Chapter One of the bier of Ma'ruf Karkhi which was fought over by Muslims and non-Muslims alike, and may therefore be of sufi origin.

Abu'l-Fazl refers to two different tombs of Kabir; one at Puri in Orissa and the other at Ratanpur in Awadh.

Kabir's concept of Absolute Reality was founded on the *dvaitadvaita-vilakshana-vada* of the Naths. Its compatibility with the *Wahdat al-Wujud* was responsible for Kabir's fame as a *muwahhid*. He says:

> 'As the bubbles of the river are accounted water and
> blend with the water of the ocean,
> *So the man who looketh on all* with an equal eye,
> shall become pure and blend with the Infinite.'[1]

Another of Kabir's hymns states:

> 'When a stream is lost in the Ganges,

[1] Macauliffe, VI, p. 249.

It becometh as the Ganges itself;
Kabir is similarly lost in God by invoking Him;
I have become as the True One and need not go elsewhere.
The perfume of the sandal is communicated to other trees;
They then become as the sandal itself.
When the philosopher's stone is applied to copper,
It becometh gold;
So Kabir having met the saints,
Hath become as God.'[1]

On the basis of the analogy of ice and water, Kabir wrote:

'Water coagulates into ice
And ice melts into water
It (the water) only changes its form
Now, nothing more can be added.[2]

Kabir's *Nirguna Brahma* has both a transcendental and immanent nature. He is God of gods, Supreme Lord, primal and omnipotent. He is unfathomable, unknowable, stainless and changeless. He is neither low nor high; in Him is neither honour nor dishonour. He is eternal, all-pervading, diffused and equally contained in all things. He extinguishes worldly sparks from the hearts of his saints and dwells in their hearts permanently. Their music is intoxicated with God's elixir. The man in whose heart nothing dwells but God is perfect.[3] To sum up are Kabir's own words:

'*Though styled* inaccessible and invisible, dwelleth within the heart.
None can find the limit or the secret of the Sustainer or the earth;
He shineth in the plantain blossom and in the sunshine,
And hath taken His dwelling in the pollen of the lotus.
God's spell is within the twelve petals of the heart
Where the holy Lord of Lakshmi reposeth.
The great *God* reacheth from the lower to the upper regions of the firmament:
He illumineth the silent realm,
Where there is neither sun nor moon.
He was in the beginning; He is without stain and happy.
Know that He pervadeth the body as well as the universe.
He batheth in Mansarowar (the lake of the heart);
His pass-word is 'Soham' (I am He);
He is not subject to merits or demerits,

[1]ibid, p. 259.
[2]*Kabir Granthawali*, Sakhi, 5, 17-1.
[3]Macauliffe, VI, pp. 143, 160, 182-83, 190, 193, 277.

Nor concerned with caste, with sunshine, or with shade;
He is only found in the *guru's* asylum.
He who fixeth his attention on Him removeth it not,
Becometh released from transmigration,
And absorbed in the Infinite,
He who knoweth God in his heart
And repeateth His name, becometh as He.
Saith Kabir, the mortal shall be saved
Who fixeth in his heart *God's* light and spell.'[1]

Kabir's void referred to *sunya*, a concept in Mahayana Buddhism and to Hindu esoteric philosophy. It represented his concept of the Ultimate Reality. In order to convey the idea of Reality transcending the causal relationship, he indulged in the ancient Indian practice of describing Reality through negatives: *neti, neti* (not this, not this). It was only to explain Reality in more commonly known terminology that he used such words as Brahma, Om, Niranjan, Kartar, Sa'in, Vishnu, Rama, Krishna, Hari, Govind, Murari, Visambhar, Gopinath, Jagannath, Madhava, Allah, Rahim, Karim and Khuda. The name most frequently used is Rama who, as he himself explains, is Nirguna Rama. He reminds:

'Kabir, call Him Ram who is omnipresent;
we must discriminate in mentioning the *two Rams*;
The one Ram (God) is contained in all things;
the other (Ram Chandar) is only contained in one thing, himself.'[2]

Again drawing on an everyday analogy in a *sloka*, Kabir wrote that God was like sugar scattered in sand, elephants could not find it, but the lowly ants could.[3] Another example used was that he could feel himself absorbed in God just as the sound of a bronze vessel was absorbed back into the pieces after it was broken.[4]

Fearlessly and cuttingly Kabir criticized ritualism and priest-craft, refusing to spare even monasticism in his scathing attacks. He also denounced hypocrisy, falsehood and deceitfulness in both religious and social ethics. Devotion, penance, austerity, fasting and ablutions were meaningless without knowing the way to love and serve God.[5]

Frequently Kabir came into contact with yogis, but he always remained unimpressed by their matted locks and unkempt appearance. In their emphasis on ascetic pursuits and obsession with physical exercises, he believed they had failed to inherit Gorakh's real absorption with the

[1]Macauliffe, VI, p. 268.
[2]ibid, p. 308.
[3]ibid, p. 315.
[4]ibid, p. 232.
[5]ibid, p. 175.

Supreme. To Kabir, one who was united with God was the real yogi.[1] Using the technical terms of yogis in his verses, Kabir often argued with their beliefs. One such hymn is as follows:

> 'Meditation and remembrance of God are my two ear-rings,
> independence of the world my patched coat;
> Dwelling in a silent cave my devotional posture,
> the abandonment of worldly desires my sect.
> My king, I am a (Jogi) without temporal love;
> I repine not at death and separation.
> In the regions of the universe I find my horn;
> the whole world, which I hold as ashes, is my wallet;
> Riddance of the three qualities and release from
> the world are my contemplative attitude.
> I have made my heart and breath the two gourds of *my lyre*,
> and unbroken attention on God its frame.
> The strings are strong and break not;
> the lyre playeth spontaneously;
> On hearing it the perfect are enraptured,
> and I no longer feel the swaying of worldly love.
> Saith Kabir, the soul which hath played in this way
> shall not be born again.'[2]

Kabir strongly denounced idol worship. Often he said that if God was found worshipping stone, he would worship a mountain. He goes on to say:

> 'Better than that stone is a hand-mill which
> grindeth corn for the world to eat.'[3]

Kabir noted that sculptors while carving idols stood on them yet were not instantly struck dead.[4] Idol worshippers offered food to their gods, which in reality was eaten by Brahmans, said Kabir and he expressed shock to see that people killed creatures in order to feed these clay gods.

To Kabir, the prayers, pilgrimages and fasting of the Muslims were equally abominable. He was critical of qazis, mullas and Shaikhs and reminded them:

> 'Make thy mind thy Kaaba, thy body its enclosing temple,
> Conscience its prime teacher;
> *Then*, O priest, call men to pray to that mosque

[1]Macauliffe, VI, p. 231.
[2]ibid, pp. 168-69.
[3]ibid, p. 141.
[4]ibid, p. 203.

Which hath ten gates.
Sacrifice wrath, doubt, and malice;
Make patience thine utterance of the five prayers.
The Hindus and the Musalmans have the same Lord;
What can the Mulla, what can the Shaikh do *for man*?
Saith Kabir, I have become mad;
Stealing my mind away *from the world* I have become blended with God.'[1]

In one of his hymns Kabir tells Brahmans and mullas alike that they should not condemn each other's religious texts as false. What was untrue was the attitude which prevented the understanding of the Reality.[2] According to Kabir, *jnana* (knowledge) and *bhakti* complemented each other, but *jnana* was a spiritual experience not to be acquired through books. The Hindu Vedas and the Gayatris to Kabir helped their readers forget God and he argued that he himself had been saved through the repetition of God's name, one who relied totally on the Vedas would be lost.[3] In the same strain he declared that Smriti, 'the daughter of the Vedas,' was a fetter for men, and could even be called a serpent. Those who kept themselves aloof from the Vedas and the sacred books of Islam were pure. His own goal was described as follows:

'The Musalmans accept the *Tariqat*;
the Hindus, the Vedas and Purans;
but for me the books of both religions are useless.
A man ought to study divine knowledge
to some extent to instruct his heart.'[4]

Kabir's criticism of contemporary religious beliefs and his faith in his own salvation do not imply an arrogance on his part. He considered himself to be the worst person alive and that everyone else was worthy. But he advised others to also hold this view[5] and even went to the extent of asking people to slander him,[6] so his egoism could be reduced to nothing and his salvation secured. There is one story that he became so disturbed by visitors that, in true *malamati* style, he pretended to be drunk and walked round the city with his arm around the neck of a courtesan.[7] Among the criticisms levelled against him were that his severity made him like a police inspector and that his words were reminiscent of a dog's bark.[8]

[1]Macauliffe, VI, pp. 258-89.
[2]ibid, p. 277.
[3]ibid, p. 242.
[4]ibid, p. 182.
[5]ibid, p. 279.
[6]ibid, p. 179.
[7]ibid, p. 131.
[8]ibid, p. 241.

Although Kabir's earthly *guru* is unknown, in his verses he speaks frequently of the necessity of a *guru* to assist in the search for the Absolute, rather than to merely rely on Yoga. Without such a teacher, a man would slip and perish. Through the *guru's* instructions, a man was taught to remember God's name in his heart and was released from eternal transmigration. On meeting his *guru*, Kabir relates a feeling of great comfort and peace of mind. He believed that if Hari (God) was estranged one could seek refuge in a *guru*, but if the *guru* was alienated there was no shelter. Only true saints should be sought as companions and those who even spoke to them received blessings transferred by them.[1] One of Kabir's *slokas* says:

'Kabir, associated with holy men even though
thou eat only barley bran:
What will be, will be; associate not with the apostate
even though he give thee better fare.[2]

When Kabir's wife criticized him for neglecting his profession and associating with shaven headed saints Kabir told her they helped the spiritually needy, hence he accepted their protection.[3] Breeding was unimportant in saintliness. The dust from a saint's foot had more value than a rosary or any other such objects. To Kabir saints didn't really die they just returned home, while infidels and the unholy remained subject to the endless cycle of transmigration.[4]

With regard to death, Kabir compared the body with an earthen pot filled with water which inevitably would burst. Death came suddenly, the things of this world were fleeting and it was then too late to repent for ignoring God's name.[5] As one had to account for one's deeds in this life, it was necessary to work for an end to transmigration. A saint's life, says Kabir, was a triumph over continual re-birth for it resulted in supreme bliss.

'If while living thou be dead, while dead return
to life by *means of divine knowledge*,
and thus become absorbed in God;
If thou abide pure amid impurity,
thou shalt not again fall into
the terrible ocean *of the world*.[6]

According to Kabir the remembrance of God in the form of the repeti-

[1] *Kabir Granthavali*, pp. 1-4.
[2] Macauliffe, p. 293.
[3] ibid, p. 236.
[4] ibid, p. 280.
[5] ibid, pp. 213, 225, 289.
[6] ibid, p. 163.

tion of his name succeeded in annihilating transmigration for through it sins could be obliterated. Although Kabir described heaven through the use of negatives, to him it was a society of saints; he himself, however, craved only absorption with God. He says:

'Everybody saith he is going thither (to heaven);
I know now where heaven is.
They who know not the secrets of their own hearts
Glibly talk of heaven.
As long as man desireth heaven,
He shall not dwell at God's feet.
I know not where heaven's gate is,
Nor its moat, nor its plastered fortress.
Saith Kabir, what *more* can I now say
Than that the society of saints is heaven?'[1]

Essentially a *bhakta*, Kabir was totally absorbed in his quest for the Supreme. But he was also deeply concerned with the religious differences between the Hindus and Muslims which, according to him were founded on false notions of religious superiority, while each lost the essence of their own beliefs. A man was courageous who ignored the rituals of his own caste and this could lead to saintliness and he rebuked Brahmans who found defilement in almost everything, reminding them that no impurity was attached to those who had God in their hearts.[2] Being a member of a lowly caste of weavers was a source of great pride to Kabir. He advised people to seek a simple existence through God in the fields, in the weaver's shop and in humble households.[3] Poverty, patience and humility were the marks of a saint; men of high rank were strangers to religion. They were like animals who stuffed themselves with food, forgetting their human nature and so making their salvation difficult.[4] Although not specifically stated, Kabir's above criticisms were directed against Muslim state officials. Those who accumulated wealth and property without spending it, were also targets for Kabir's attack.

'*God* gave the miser wealth to keep,
but the blockhead calleth it his own.
When Death's mace toucheth his head,
it shall be decided in a moment *whose wealth it is*.'[5]

Again, he reminds the wealthy:

[1]Macauliffe, pp. 265-66.
[2]ibid, p. 161.
[3]ibid, pp. 154-56.
[4]ibid, p. 253.
[5]ibid, p. 204.

'Kabir, this body shall depart; put it on some road
On which it may either hold converse with saints, or
sing God's praises.'[1]

Kabir frequently referred to *maya.* In the *Rig Veda*, the term is used in the sense of magical power and the *Upanishads* use it in the sense of false knowledge. In Shankara's *advaita*, the phenomenal world of nature and all beings which have no real existence emanate from *maya.* According to a general interpretation, *maya* leads created beings to an infatuation with the transitory pleasures of the world and the flesh. It is the counterpart of the sufi *nafs-i lawwama*, and Kabir uses it in this sense. He calls it a thief which breaks into the hearts of the worldly and deprives them of their virtue. In a hymn Kabir describes *maya* as a hideous and repulsive (woman), whose nose he says only a few discriminating people could chop off.[2]

Kabir lived far from the Lodi capital. During the last days of the Sharqis and in the reign of Bahlul Lodi, the Banaras region where Kabir lived was plagued with civil war and political struggle. The saint remained detached from this situation, his main concern being only with social and ethical regeneration. Kabir noted with distress how people dealt in bronze, copper, cloves and betel nuts. Thakurs[3] measured the fields and the villagers were never free of debts entered in the Patwari's[4] books. To him the most important accounts[5] were those with God.[6]..

According to tradition, early in the reign of Sikandar Lodi, after crushing his rival, Barbak, the Sultan remained for a period in Banaras. There the Muslims, led by Shaikh Taqi and the Brahman community, complained that those who accepted Kabir's ideas automatically ceased to be Hindus or Muslims. Kabir was imprisoned but various supernatural feats saved his life. Although such a story would seem mythical, according to historical sources during Sikandar Lodi's reign, a Brahman called Bodhan or Lodhan declared Islam and Hinduism as both true religions. The Brahman may have come from either Lakhnauti in the Bijnor district or Lakhnur in Sambhal. In both these regions the impact of Kabir's ideas was not great. Lodhan seems instead to have been influenced by the spiritual *milieu* of the fifteenth century. Qazi Piyara and Shaikh Budh gave conflicting *fatwas* as appropriate retribution for such heresy. At his camp at Sambhal the Sultan convened an assembly of the empire's leading 'ulama'. The result was that Lodhan was imprison-

[1] Macauliffe, p. 282.
[2] ibid, p. 197.
[3] Village leaders subordinate to revenue officials.
[4] A village revenue official.
[5] An important case in point is the concern of Farid over the tyranny of village officials. He later became Sher Shah. *Tarikh-i Sher Shahi*, pp. 16-25.
[6] Macauliffe, p. 251. See also *Kabir-Granthawali*, p. 251.

ed, instructed in Islam and after he refused to convert, was executed.[1] Persecution, however, did not silence the *bhaktas* and *sants* and they continued to increase both in number and significance.

With a faith as strong as the Prophet's and a belief that he was the vehicle for divine inspiration, Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, asserted that there was neither Hindu nor Musalman. Although he did not denounce Hinduism or Islam, like Kabir, he condemned everything he believed interfered with the essential message of these religions. In Guru Nanak's view, only realization of the divine mystery which brought seekers near Ultimate Reality and Creative Truth merited attention; the literal meaning of the Vedas or the Qur'an was no help. They should not necessarily be rejected, but the perception of Reality and Being which he called Ek-Onkar or Par-Brahm, should not be confined to narrow religious principles.

Unlike Kabir, the broad outline of Guru Nanak's life is reasonably clear. The fifth Guru, Arjan Dev (1563–81–1606) collected the inspiring hymns written by Guru Nanak and his disciples in the Sikh 'Bible,' the *Adi-Granth* which is also known as the *Granth-Saheb* or the *Guru-Granth*. He also went to the extent of incorporating the authentic poems of the fourteen *bhaktas* preceding Guru Nanak. This appendix to the *Guru-Granth* is the most authentic anthology of the movement and a memorable collection of medieval devotional literature. The *Guru-Granth* was completed at Amritsar in 1604 and gradually came to be considered divine revelation. It is disappointing for one, like W.H. McLeod, who wishes to find historical details amongst its pages, particularly of events in the Guru's life. The *Janam-Sakhis*, as W.H. McLeod states, are hagiographic accounts from the life of Guru Nanak and like all such writings are intended to fulfil the spiritual cravings of the Guru's followers. They were modelled on the pattern of the *Maulud-Namas*[2] of the Prophet Muhammad, the Puranas and the legendary sufi hagiologies. Inevitably supernatural and miraculous material predominates, in order to inspire devotion to the Guru. The disinterring of the 'historical Nanak' is an interesting intellectual exercise, attempted by many scholars, the latest being W.H. McLeod. What is disconcerting is the general dependance, notably by McLeod, on historically unreliable material and an interpretation founded on nineteenth and twentieth century conditions.

Guru Nanak was born in 1469 in the village of Talwandi later known as Nankana Sahib, about forty miles south-west of Lahore, now part of Pakistan. Most of his life occurred during the reign of the Lodis. The earliest account of this age is in the *Waqi'at-i Mushtaqi*, a collection of anecdotes, interesting for its social history rather than the general recreation of the period. It is the work of Shaikh Rizqu'llah Mushtaqi and was completed some time before the author's death in 1581. The

[1] *Tabaqat-i Akbari*, I, pp. 222-23.
[2] The legendary account of the Prophet Muhammad's birth and life.

board of scholars appointed by Akbar to write one thousand years of Islamic history from the time of the death of the Prophet, admitted that they had no written record of the Afghan days[1] and compiled an account of that period from Mughal sources and oral traditions. Nizamu'd-Din Ahmad's *Tabaqat-i Akbari*, completed in 1592–93, draws upon the *Tarikh-i Alfi*. Afghan historians who wrote during Jahangir's reign based their compilations on the *Tabaqat-i Akbari* with occasional recourse to *Waqi'at-i Mushtaqi* and anecdotes from members of old Afghan families. This material cannot be safely relied on to dispute the account written by Bhai Gurdas Bhalla, who assisted in the compilation of the *Adi-Granth*. The account known as *Bhai Gurdas' Var I* was written in the first quarter of the seventeenth century. In the seventeenth century, the protracted political struggles between the Sikhs and the Mughals warranted self-confidence rather than humility and the *Janam-Sakhis* writers of that century naturally represented the founder of their faith as supernatural being. The authors of the *Janam-Sakhis* were not aware of the geography, history and customs of the regions in which Guru Nanak had travelled and gaps were filled in on the basis of his hymns. This does not necessarily imply that the basic outline of Guru Nanak's itinerary is unreliable.

In the fifteenth century, the Panjab enjoyed a peaceful period due to Afghan rule. The Mongol invasions between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries had devastated portions of the Panjab and the Afghans had successfully contributed to its re-settlement and urbanization by founding many new towns and promoting trade and commerce. The parents of Guru Nanak came from the Khattri community which was closely connected with the Afghan rulers in the fields of commerce and administration. Guru Nanak's father, Kalu, was a village accountant and as was customary with members of that profession he supplemented his income through agriculture. When seven years old, Nanak was taken by his father to receive instruction in Hinduism. Two years later, attempts were made to teach him Persian. Following Islamic traditions that Prophet Muhammad was an *ummi*,[2] the *Janam-Sakhis* imply that Guru Nanak failed to benefit from such a formal education. It would, however, seem that he learnt both Sanskrit and Persian. In those days Sa'di's *Karima* and the *Gulistan*, as well as general sufi verses were taught to both Hindu and Muslim youths. But the Guru's heart was in meditation, not learning. Moreover he showed no interest in a worldly profession. When about sixteen, Nanak was married by his parents and under pressure from his family he later became a trader and farmer. Nevertheless most of Nanak's time was spent with yogis who lived in the surrounding jungles.

[1] *Tarikh-i Alfi*, India Office, MS, Ethé, 112, f. 373a.

[2] The word means illiterate but when referring to Muhammad it means a lack of knowledge of the religious scriptures.

Guru Nanak's brother-in-law, Jai Ram, a steward of Daulat Khan[1] in Sultanpur secured for him a position in the Khan's commissariat. There the minstrel, Bhai Mardana, a favourite friend of the Guru's, joined him. While at Sultanpur the Guru shocked both Muslims and Hindus by declaring that there was neither a (true) Hindu nor a (true) Muslim. He also incensed a qazi who forced him to perform congregational prayers by telling him that his *namaz* was mechanical as he had been busy thinking only of his business ventures.[2] Soon afterwards, accompanied by Bhai Mardana, Nanak left Sultanpur. *En route* to Panipat, after hearing Nanak's hymns, Shaikh Sajjan relinquished his life as a robber and became a sufi saint.[3] In keeping with recognized sufi practices, Guru Nanak advised Sajjan to openly confess his sins and make reparation to his victims.[4] At Panipat Nanak also had discussions with the spirit of Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din Abu 'Ali Qalandar.[5]

When Guru Nanak reached Delhi, Ibrahim Lodi (1517–26) was on the throne. The Guru was dressed like a *malamati*. His itinerary from Panipat to Assam is related in a confused way by different *Janam-Sakhis* but he seems to have visited the main centres of Hindu pilgrimage as well as the monasteries of leading Hindu and Muslim saints. The *Janam-Sakhis* give the impression that the Guru conversed with deceased *bhaktas*, but what really is implied is that he did so in a spiritual sense. About 1520 Guru Nanak returned from his visit to eastern India only to find the Panjab plunged into a number of significant political crises. Zahiru'd-Din Muhammad Babur (*b.* 6 Muharram 888/14 February 1483) who had legitimately succeeded to his father's throne in Farghana in June 1494 was driven from his kingdom. In June 1504 he seized Kabul but thereafter followed twelve years of frustrated struggle in Khurasan and central Asia. Finally he turned his attention to India and started unsuccessful negotiations with Ibrahim to annex west Panjab to Kabul. After two minor raids around the region between the Indus and Jhelum, Babur invaded a third time over the Panjab in 926/1520 reaching as far as Sialkot.[6] Guru Nanak and Mardana witnessed the massacre of the

[1]He was the son of Tatar Khan Yusuf Khail whom Bahlul had appointed governor of the region between Sarhind and Dipalpur. About 1485 he rebelled, but Prince Nizam (Sikandar Lodi) defeated and killed him. *Waqi'at-i Mushlaqi*, pp. 16-73; S.A.A. Rizvi, *Uttar Timur kalin*. Daulat Khan obtained the *iqta'* of Sultanpur, either during his father's lifetime or some time after his death. Gradually he also became the governor of the Panjab and in 1523 invited Babur to invade India. McLeod, who did not have access to the original sources, is unnecessarily suspicious of Daulat Khan's position. *Guru Nanak and the Sikh religion*, Oxford, 1968, pp. 108-09.

[2]The story is reminiscent of Shaikh Hasan Afghan's encounter with the Imam. *See* Chapter Three, pp. 202-03, *supra*.

[3]*See* the biography of Shaikh Fuzayl bin 'Iyaz in Chapter One, pp. 36-37, *supra*.

[4]This was a recognized sufi custom; *see* Baba Farid's instructions to Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' in Chapter Two, p. 157-58, *supra*.

[5]A conversation with the Shaikh's spirit, in keeping with sufi traditions.

[6]*Gulshan-i Ibrahimi*, p. 202.

inhabitants of Saiyidpur (Amanabad) and were taken captive. Six years later even a sufi of such prominence as Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus was forced to undergo similar hardships at the hands of the Mughal troops. Along with other captives Guru Nanak was presented to Babur. The Sultan was an empire builder rather than a blood-thirsty tyrant and so impressed with the Guru's hymns was he that Guru Nanak was released along with some other prisoners. The *Babur-Vani* chapter in the *Adi-Granth* fills in the gaps of the existing political histories, which tend to describe military details rather than the sufferings of the common people. The *Lata'if-i Quddusi*[1] supports the evidence by Guru Nanak contained in the *Babur-Vani*. Here is part of his description of this period:

> 'Millions of priests tried *by their miraculous power*
> to restrain *the Emperor* when they heard of his approach.
> He burned houses, mansions, and palaces;
> he cut princes to pieces, and had them rolled in the dust.
> No Mughal hath become blind;
> no *priest* hath wrought a miracle.
> There was a contest between the Mughals and Pathans;
> the sword has wielded in the battle.
> One side aimed and discharged their guns,
> the other also handled their *weapons*:
> They whose letter (death notice) hath been torn in
> God's court must die my brethren.
> *There were* the wives of Hindus, of Turks,
> of Bhattis, and of Rajputs.
> The robes of some were torn from head to foot;
> the dwellings of others were their places of cremation.
> How did they whose husbands came
> not home pass the night?
> The Creator acteth and causeth others to act;
> to whom shall man complain?
> Misery and happiness are according to Thy pleasure;
> to whom shall we go to cry?
> The Commander is pleased issuing His orders;
> Nanak, man obtaineth what is allotted him.'[2]

There can be no better comment on Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus' letter protesting the imposition of *'ushr* on Muslim rent-free grants than the following hymns of Guru Nanak:

[1]The *Lata'if-i Quddusi* says that Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus prayed that people might escape such calamity but was told by Allah that even Prophets and great sages had had to suffer similar hardship and the Shaikh himself was not their equal, p. 63. Guru Nanak had, of course, not read the *Lata'if-i Quddusi*.

[2]Macauliffe, I, pp. 115-16.

'The Primal Being is *now* called Allah;
the turn of the Shaikhs hath come.
There is a tax on the shrines of the gods;
such is the practice established.
There are ablution-pots, calls to prayer, five daily prayers,
prayer-carpets, and God appeareth dressed in blue.
In every house all say Mian (a Muslim title);
your language hath been changed.
Since Thou, who art Lord of the earth *has appointed Babar*
a Mir (Lord) what power have we?
In the four directions men make Thee obeisance, and
Thy praises are uttered in every house.
The profit which is obtained from pilgrimages,
repeating the Smritis, and bestowing alms all day long,
Is, O Nanak, obtained in one *ghari* by remembering the Name
which conferreth greatness.'[1]

Guru Nanak's second journey took him down south, perhaps as far as Ceylon. The fact that there was no ruler named Sivanabh in Ceylon at the time as mentioned in the *Janam-Sakhis*[2] does not make such a trip unlikely. Besides Hindu Tamils there were Muslim immigrants from the Persian Gulf and regions around the Indian Ocean, known by the Portuguese and Spaniards as Moors. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries a number of sufis are known to have visited Ceylon to pay homage to the legendary foot-prints of Adam. According to Ibn Battuta, Adam was known in Ceylon as Baba (Father) and Eve as Mama (Mother). The exploits of a sufi named Shaikh Abu 'Abdu'llah bin Khafif had helped to make Islam respectable in Ceylon. Near the footprints were several caves associated with legendary Muslim holy men and Ibn Battuta reports of a famous Hindu temple in a town nearby where he found three thousand Brahmans and yogis and five hundred Devadasis[3] dancing before an idol. The town's entire revenue from taxes was spent on this temple.[4] Trumpp says that the account of the trip was unhistorical and a later invention. His remark that the Sikh authors were generally unaware of the fact that the popular religion in Ceylon was Buddhism[5] proves his ignorance of the Ceylonese religious and racial composition.

After his return from Ceylon, Guru Nanak seems to have visited Kashmir. Trumpp concurs with this but is sceptical that he may have visited the legendary Mount Sumeru or Maru where he was alleged to

[1] Macauliffe, I, p. 117. These hymns seem to have been written sometime after 1526.

[2] W.H. McLeod, *Guru Nanak and the Sikh religion*, Oxford, 1968, p. 114.

[3] *Banat al-Hinaud*, girls who dedicated themselves to singing and dancing before temple gods.

[4] *Voyages d'Ibn Batoutah*, IV, pp. 165-85.

[5] E. Trumpp, *The Adi Granth*, 2nd edition, New Delhi, 1970, p. VI.

have held debates with Naths and Siddhas. In fact the *Janam-Sakhis* were concerned with providing a geographical background for Guru Nanak's criticism of what he believed to be the deviation of the Naths and Siddhas from the true teachings of their masters, and the suggestion of a visit to Sumeru need not be accepted literally.

Guru Nanak's second and third visits seem to have been completed between 1520 and 1527. By 1528 he was back in the Panjab and Babur, having defeated Ibrahim Lodi and Rana Sanga, had become the Padshah of Hindustan. Babur's extravagance necessitated the imposition of new taxes including *'ushr* on the *madad-i ma'ash*. Although this distressed the Muslim community, Guru Nanak saw it as the divine will.

Later the Guru went to Mecca and Baghdad. Trumpp summarily dismisses this as impossible, but McLeod, based on his knowledge of the adventures of Barton and Keane[1] and using his own intuition, argues that the account in the *Janam-Sakhis* is untrustworthy. To him it is highly improbable that a non-Muslim could openly enter Mecca in the manner indicated in the *Janam-Sakhis*, and he adds that the entry of Guru Nanak in a complete disguise would have been 'altogether uncharacteristic of him.'[2] McLeod's arguments are founded on an ignorance of contemporary sufi accounts. For example, the *Siraju'l-Hidaya* mentions a yogi accompanying a Muslim saint to the Ka'ba.[3] Moreover to Muslims travelling to Mecca, Guru Nanak would not have been considered a Hindu, but a *muwahhid* dressed as a *malamati* so as to edify them through his example. Qalandars, *malamatis* and *majzubs* frequently visited Mecca dressed in a manner which might appear bizarre, fantastic and even ludicrous to some, but from the time of Hallaj to Jamali, many sufis travelled to Mecca barely clad and their bodies encrusted in dust.

The legend that the Ka'ba or the *mihrab*[4] of the principal mosque, moved in the direction of the Guru's feet need not be interpreted literally. The story is based on the sufi belief that great saints did not need to circumambulate the Ka'ba, for whichever way they looked it would appear before them. In fact sufis believed that eminent saints and holy men were recipients of the divine light, while the *K'aba* itself was a building of mere stone and rubble.

The discourses in the *Janam-Sakhis* are obvicusly meant as a teaching device to show Indians that Ram and Rahim were the same Being, and one too pedantic to be interpreted literally. Some Sikh scholars have sought archaeological confirmation of Guru Nanak's journey to Baghdad

[1]R.F. Burton, *A pilgrimage to al-Madinah and Mecca*; J.F. Keane, *Six months in the Hejaz.*

[2]*Guru Nanak and the Sikh religion*, pp. 124-25.

[3]*Siraju'l-Hidaya*, India Office, Delhi, Persian, 1938, p. 51.

[4]A niche in the centre of a wall in a mosque, marking the direction of Mecca and in front of which the Imam leads the congregation in prayer. *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 348. The description of the Ka'ba and the *Mihrab* is based on the Indian practices as the authors who wrote the *Janam-Sakhis* had no real knowledge of the fact that the Ka'ba was a cube-like building, in the middle of the mosque at Mecca. There was no question of a *mihrab*.

and their attempt shows more enthusiasm than judgement. The better type of sufis and *sants* or *bhaktas* always shrank from publicity; service to mankind was their aim, not personal glory. The Arabic inscription at Baghdad which is alleged by some to refer to the Guru in fact does not and is in sixteenth century Turkish.[1] Guru Nanak travelled to Baghdad to obtain first-hand knowledge of the centre of the Qadiri order of Pir-i Dastgir Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani. He could not become interested in Bahlul Dana. Guru Nanak, preoccupied with discovering and disseminating Truth, would not have cared about a lasting material memorial to himself and certainly nothing of this kind was left by him in his own country.

A similar effort is made by other scholars to authenticate Guru Nanak's visit to Ceylon on the basis of epigraphical evidence but such pursuits have no real relevance to the great Guru's life.

After his return from the Middle East, Guru Nanak seems to have remained in the Panjab, occasionally visiting Ajodhan, Multan and a place called Gorakhtari. According to Trumpp the existence of such a town has not been substantiated by modern geographers.[2] McLeod rightly locates the site in Peshawar.[3] Babur mentions his visit to a place which according to Persian script is either 'Gorkhattari' or perhaps 'Gorakhtari.'[4] According to Dani the spot was associated with 'the tower of Buddha's bowl.'[5] Like other Buddhist sites occupied by yogis, it became a centre for their activities. In the reign of Akbar and Jahangir it was an important yogi centre of pilgrimage.

At Ajodhan and Multan, Guru Nanak was reported to have had discussions with Baba Farid and Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya. Some scholars have suggested that there may have been some descendants of the two great saints with the same names with whom the Guru may have exchanged ideas. The suggestion is far-fetched although Guru Nanak did undoubtedly enjoy the company of sufis in these towns. The *suhbat* (company of the pious) was as important a spiritual institution to sufis as the *satsang* (society of holy men) was to the *bhaktas*. However, the *Janam-Sakhis* expressed the sufi and Nath belief that great saints did not die but remained accessible to important mystics in later ages through spiritual conversation. Affifi says:

> '"His (Ibn al-'Arabi's) own imagination was as active in his dreams as in his waking life. He tells us the dates when and the places where he had the visions, in which he saw prophets and saints and discoursed

[1]Comments by Dr. V.L. Menage, Reader, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, in *Guru Nanak and the Sikh religion*, pp. 130-31.

[2]*Adi Granth*, p. VI.

[3]*Guru Nanak and the Sikhs*, p. 65.

[4]S.A.A. Rizvi, *Babur Nama* in *Mughal kalin Bharat-Babur*, Aligarh, 1965, pp. 109-10.

[5]A.H. Dani, *Peshawar, historic city of the Frontier*, Peshawar, 1969, p. 36.

with them; and others in which a whole book like the *Fusus* was handed to him by the Prophet Muhammad who bade him "take it and go forth, with it to the people that they may make use thereof."'[1]

Thus when the *Janam-Sakhis* describe Guru Nanak's conversation with the saints of the past, this should invariably be interpreted as a mystic experience or, in the sufi sense, a chat with the spirits, although presented as if taken place by two living people.

Although Guru Nanak was a monotheist, it was not the Unity of God which the orthodox Muslims believed to be his main interest but the Unity of Being or the *Wahdat al-Wujud* represented as *Dvaitadvaita-vilakshana-vada* by the Nath sages. Based on *Om*, the Absolute of Nanak's teachings is *Ek-Onkar* (The One Indivisible Absolute Being) or the Absolute Reality. The Absolute is beyond the time process, is unincarnated and named *Par-Brahm* (Transcendent). The *Japji*, the opening chapter of the *Adi Granth* which all Sikhs are required to repeat in the morning, reminds them:

> 'There is but one God whose name is true, the Creator, devoid of fear and enmity, immortal, unborn, self-existent; by the favour of the Guru.'

Like the God of Ibn al-'Arabi, Guru Nanak's God creates, but He also manifests Himself in an infinite number of forms. The divine essence is the knower, the known and the knowing:

> 'And Filling all, He Upholdeth all,
> and is yet Detached:
> O, He is the One who is both
> Manifest and Unmanifest all over.'[2]

Guru Nanak's Lord is self-existent, infinite, unfathomable, creator, sustainer, destroyer, formless, imperceptible, without family, immaculate, transcendent, immanent and ineffable. In His primal aspect He is the eternally unchanging formless one (*Nirankar*), inscrutable (*agam*), boundless (*apar*) and beyond time (*akal*). He is the 'one husband.' His *Qudrat*[3] in the technical sense of sufism is beyond comprehension. He is immanent and should not be sought outside the soul. His light pervades and illuminates all hearts. He is revealed only through the True Word

[1] A.E. Affifi, *Ibn 'Arabi in a history of Muslim philosophy*, I, pp. 403-04.

[2] Gopal Singh, *Sir Guru-Granth Sahib*, IV, p. 974.

[3] In orthodox Islamic terminology it is one of the attributes of God which represents His power. To sufis it is the incomprehensible Divine Will. Jili, *Insan al-Kamil*, Cairo, 1300/1882-88, p. 62; Lahiji, *Sharh-i Gulshan-i Raz*, Tehran, 1330, Iranian era, p. 578; 'Ali al-Jurjani, *Kitab al-Ta'rifat*, Beirut, 1969, p. 180.

and accordingly Guru Nanak's theology gives the highest importance to the True Name. Muslims assigned ninety-nine Most Beautiful names to God. However Rumi warns:

'"God has called Himself *Basir* (Seeing), in order that His seeing thee may at every moment be a deterrent (against sin). God has called Himself *Sami'* (Hearing), in order that thou mayst close thy lips (and refrain) from foul speech. God has called Himself *'Alim* (Knowing), in order that thou mayst fear to meditate a wicked deed. These are not proper names applicable to God: (proper names are merely designations), for even a negro may have the name Kafur (Camphor)."'[1]

Of the ninety-nine names, it is believed that one is the *Ism-i A'zam* (The Great Name). Sufi literature has taken great pains to search for that One name. Ibrahim bin Adham, who was once asked about Ism-i A'zam, said:

'"Keep your belly free from unlawful food; exclude the world from your heart; then whatever name you use to invoke Him will be Ism-i A'zam."'[2]

Like sufis, Guru Nanak considered everything other than God untrue. According to the nature of the occasion, his audience of his message, he selected traditional terms used by Hindus and Muslims to invoke God, such as Allah, Khuda, Sahib, Hari and Rama and so on, but *Guru ka Sabad* or *Guru's Word*,' inexplicable and undefinable, is his *Ism-i A'zam*. He warns:

'"Pilgrimages, Austerities, Mercy, Charity,
Bring but honour small and paltry.
One must Hear, Believe, Love the Name,
And Bathe at the sacred fount within one's frame.
For worship there cannot be till virtues shine.
So pray: 'Thine art all the Virtues, Thine.
O Primal Word, Maya, Brahma, Hail to Thee.
Thou that art Truth, Ever-Joy, Beauty.'
What the time, season, day, month of Creation?
Knows None.
Not the Pundits, even if it be in the text of a Puran,
Nor the Qazi does who interprets the Qur'an.
Nor Yogi knows the date, season, month, but the One
Who created the Universe, Knoweth alone.

[1]R.A. Nicholson, *The Mathnawi of Jalalu'd-Din Rumi*, IV, Cambridge, 1939, p. 284.
[2]*Fawa'idu'l-Fu'ad*, pp. 110-11.

How to describe Him, Praise Him, speak of him, Know Him best?
Yea, say they, all they know, one wiser than the rest.
Great is the Master, Great His Name.
All that is, proceeds from Him.
He, who thinks of himself much, is vain,
And will look small in God's Domain."'[1]

Describing the creative activity of God, Guru Nanak says:

'And He, the Lord Himself was the Merchant and Himself
the Pedlar: for, such was His will.
Neither there were the Vedas, nor the Semitic Texts,
neither Smritis nor the Shastras;
Nor the reading of the Puranas, neither the sunrise
nor the sundown.
He, the Lord, alone uttered Himself remaining Unperceived
Knowing only Himself His Unknowable.
When such was His Will, He brought the Universe into
being,
And without a seeming contraption, Upheld He its Vast
Expanse.
And created He also the Brahma, Vishnu and the Shiva, and
instilled in men the ever-mounting desire for being attached.
But rare's the one whom the Guru caused to hear His
Word.
For, the Lord Gave the Command and Saw it Happen and be
all over.
And (thus) He Created all the universe and their parts
and the underworlds, and from the Absolute Self He Became
Manifest.
O, no one knoweth the Extent of my God:
And 'tis only through the perfect Guru that He's
Revealed unto us.
Sayeth Nanak: 'They who're Imbued with His Truth are
Inebriated with His Wonder: and thus wonderstruck,
they sing ovei His Praise."'[2]

The sufi interpretation of the divine will (*Riza*) and Guru Nanak's concept of *Hukam* answer a very wide range of questions relating to human consciousness and to the Creative Activity of the Supreme. Some hymns use *Hukam* and *Riza* as interchangeable terms.[3] For the last

[1] *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, I, p. 6.

[2] ibid, IV, pp. 988-89.

[3] Japji, *Adi Granth*, Rag Vadhans, 1, Rag Asa 579, Rag Parbhati, 1328, 1330, Rag Dhanasari, 685.

thirteen hundred years, Muslim scholars have been divided over what constitutes the nature and scope of *Riza*, and many schools of thought have emerged supporting contradictory theories. Sufis interpret *Riza* as an aspect of God's infinite mercy and grace, this would constitute a normal response to the yearnings of a loving heart.[1] In their interpretation of *Riza* the sufi poets associate it with the *Jamal* (Divine Beauty) of the Supreme. The teachings of Guru Nanak on *Hukam* and *Riza* are comprehensive and broadly based. They incorporate all important aspects of *Riza* found in sufi works. McLeod's observation that: 'In Islam the divine will, if not actually capricious, is at least "unpledged," whereas the *Hukam* of Guru Nanak's usage is definitely pledged and dependable,'[2] fails to show an understanding of either the theological *Riza* or the mystical *Riza* which is equivalent to *Hukam*.

The Guru urged his followers to worship the True One with adoring love and yearn for Him as a bride for her bridegroom. There is an element of fear in his *bhakti* which is absent from the love for God of such great sufis as Rabi'a.

Guru Nanak's perception of *man* is based on the sufi *qalb*, as opposed to a physical heart, and is therefore identical to that of the Naths and of Kabir. Repeatedly he urged men to sing God's praise. The *haumai* (I), in the sense used by Abu Yazid Bastami, is the main obstacle to man becoming a mirror in which God is reflected. Pride, anger, lust (*lobh*) and attachment are also great enemies but not to the same extent as *haumai*.[3] *Maya* in Kabir's terms prevents the return of the soul to its 'home' and keeps it on the treadmill of transmigration. A guru, however, helps to overcome both *haumai* and *maya* and to dispell the darkness. In Guru Nanak's technical terminology a *guru* is not a person but either God Himself, or His Voice and His Name personified.

Nanak's teachings are distinguished by a stern ethical tone and a practical approach to the problems of life. He rejects asceticism and advocates living a normal life accompanied by piety and righteousness. He says:

> 'He alone, O Nanak, Knoweth the Way,
> Who earneth with the sweat of his brow,
> and then shareth it with the others.'[4]

The teachings of the Chishtis on this subject were identical. The great Guru emphasized honest work and deprecated *mullas*, *pirs* and

[1] Ghazali, *Ihya al-'Ulum*, IV, pp. 333-41.

[2] *Guru Nanak and the Sikh religion*, p. 201. McLeod owes his definition of the divine will to Canon Kenneth Gragg but fails to acknowledge any reference to any of the latter's works.

[3] *Adi Granth*, Japji, 1, Astpadian 272; Rag Basant, 1188; Rag Gauri, 225; Rag Parbhati, 1342, Rag Asa (Astpadian), 60; Var Malar, 1289, Var 4, Gauri 3.

[4] *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, IV, p. 1191.

yogis who lived on charity. Of those who laboured he said:

> 'They who eat the fruit of their labour and bestow something,
> O Nanak, recognize the right way.'[1]

Guru Nanak envisaged a society in which cultivators prepared the soil for sowing properly and merchants were honest. Income earned from dishonest means were the forbidden products of pork and beef to Muslims and Hindus respectively.[2] The wearing of impressive white garments did not help to cleanse the heart. Learning the Vedas, the Puranas and the Qur'an without following the truth contained in these works was useless. Likewise Hindus and Muslims would gain no spiritual benefit from their purification rituals for real impurity was greed, falsehood and degrading sensual passions. The essence of goodness was humility and service to others.

Guru Nanak accepted the caste structure in a spirit of resignation to the divine will but condemned the social prejudices surrounding the concepts of high and low castes believing that only those who considered themselves *nich* (low) before God attained salvation. Guru Nanak's social and economic ideas were devised completely around the goal of salvation and were intended to be universal and apply to every age.

Unlike Kabir, Nanak's political teachings were broadly based. Like his social and economic ideas, Nanak's political views were well-founded on a drive for spiritual regeneration towards a new life of grace (*nadar*), nevertheless he drew a large number of religious metaphors from political life. To Guru Nanak, the true king or the king of kings (*padshah*) was God, in whose presence Sultans, Khans and other officers became dust. God Himself elevated some people to rule and others to become wandering beggars, therefore kingship in Guru Nanak's world-view was not evil. Like all sufis, he reminded rulers to be just and not only concerned with the acquisition of power. Drawing upon the mixed Lodi and Mughal political and administrative terminology he ascribed the existence of blood-sucking *rajas* and dog-like *muqaddams*[3] to the *Kaliyuga*;[4] similarly sufis blamed religious and ethical degeneration to their age's remoteness from the golden era of the Prophet and the *Khulafa-i Rashidun*, and awaited a Mahdi or Messiah.

Guru Nanak died at Kartarpur in 1539. Before his death he appointed Lehna his successor. Although Lehna came from a rich family, after becoming the Guru's disciple, in accordance with sufi traditions, he was made to perform such humiliating tasks as carrying loads of wet grass.

[1]Macauliffe, I, p. 39.

[2]*Adi Granth*, Sri Rag, 14, 16, Rag Gauri (Astpadian), 225-27.

[3]Traditional village leaders.

[4]The present age of mankind; *Adi Granth*, Var Majh 142, Var Malar 1288, Rag Asa, 350, Rag Basant 1191.

As the First Guru he was known as Guru Angad (1539–52). Although the word 'Guru' in Nanak's teachings stood for the voice of God and not necessarily for an individual, posterity recognized him as the personification of the light of God. It came to be believed that the mingling of 'the light' of the Guru with that of Guru Angad was in accordance with God's *Riza*. The idea of the transmission of light helped to form the disciples of Guru Nanak and his successors into a *panth* or order.

After the death of the Fifth Guru, Arjan, at the hands of the Mughal Jahangir, the Sikhs dropped their pacifist policy and adopted their famous martial spirit. This led to a series of protracted conflicts between the Sikhs and the Mughals which soon took the form of a religious war. Gradually the Sikhs came to see themselves as a reformed Hindu sect, tracing the source of their beliefs chiefly from the Vedas, the *Upanishads* and later Sanskrit classics. The *sants* are often referred to in passing, however, the superiority of Sikhism as a religion was asserted over other faiths. Even in sober works, Islam and sufism were referred to contemptuously. McLeod however noting some similarities between sufi ideas and those of Guru Nanak adds:

> 'The appearance is, however, misleading. Affinities certainly exist, but we cannot assume that they are necessarily the result of Sufi influence. Other factors suggest that Sufism was at most a marginal influence, encouraging certain developments but in no case providing the actual source of a significant element.'

The following remarks, however, make McLeod's understanding of sufism clear. He says:

> 'In the first place, there is the fact that the Panjabi sufism of Guru Nanak's period had evidently departed radically from the classical pattern of Arab and Persian Sufism. Guru Nanak himself indicates this condition in references which place Sufis under the same condemnation as the conventional qazis and mullahs. Classical Sufism evidently had little opportunity to influence him, for there is no evidence to suggest that he came in contact with it during his formative years, nor even in subsequent years.
> The evidence which can be derived from his works points not to a regular direct contact with members of Sufi orders, but rather to the kind of informal contact with ordinary Muslims which would have been inevitable in his circumstances. Amongst those Muslims there would certainly be some strict Sunnis and we can assume that there would also be a number who might fitly be described as Sufis. The majority would, however, represent in varying degrees the blend of modified orthodoxy and debased Sufism which was dominant

in the Muslim community of the Panjab during this period.'[1]

These remarks introduce a number of ideas which are founded on a total ignorance of both sunni orthodoxy and sufism in India. Readers of the previous pages need not be reminded that there was no classical pattern of Arab and Persian sufism. If by classical sufism, McLeod was referring to the thoughts of sufis such as 'Attar, Rumi and Sa'di who were also poets in the classical Persian mould all literate Panjabis, both Hindus and Muslims, at the time of Guru Nanak were conversant with them. Certainly the Guru belonged to a literate family. A large number of sufi centres had emerged all over the Islamic world which had established their own particular features and the developments in India were significant in their own right. McLeod's remark that amongst the Muslims who came into contact with Guru Nanak: 'There would certainly be some strict sunnis' and some who 'might fitly be described as Sufis' tends to indicate that in his mind Sunni orthodoxy and sufism were identical. What McLeod is sure of is the existence of a debased sufism in the Muslim community of the Panjab. He seems to be unaware of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus Gangohi who lived in Shahabad, his disciple, Shaikh Jalal of Thaneswar, and the Qadiris who had made the Panjab the main centre of their activities. Although the *Janam-Sakhis* of the seventeenth century do not mention Guru Nanak's visit to these personalities, it is unbelievable that he made 'informal contacts with ordinary Muslims' alone and not with the great sufi saints of his own days. It is therefore not surprising that McLeod, whose main concern was to find flaws with the accounts in the *Janam-Sakhis* of Guru Nanak's visit to Ajodhan, Multan and Panipat, failed to perceive the sufi influence extending from those centres. Guru Nanak undoubtedly criticized sufis at several places as suggested by McLeod but he intended to denounce only impostors and charlatans who made a living out of mysticism. Great sufis also attacked such people, along with mullas and qazis. Nanak did likewise.

Our analysis of Guru Nanak's teachings in the light of sufi beliefs should not be construed as an assertion that the great Guru borrowed his ideas from sufis. It would indicate that Guru Nanak, through his own meditation, arrived at the same conclusions as had already been reached by sufis such as Rumi, Sa'di, 'Iraqi, Jami and Hafiz. Guru Nanak presents his thoughts with remarkable consistency. Although some hymns in the *Adi-Granth* read like portions of the *Masnawi* of Maulana Rumi, which Jami called 'the Qur'an in Persian,' there is nothing to indicate that Guru Nanak was imitating the great poet. The spiritual life of India discussed in this chapter bears out the Rig Vedic assertion:

'The One Reality, the learned speak of in many ways.'

[1]*Guru Nanak and the Sikh religion*, pp. 158-59.

Chapter Seven

Conclusion

SUFISM, as we have seen, is a very complex phenomenon. In India it took root in both the rural and urban areas. In some cases, the deep impact of sufism and its popularity among the masses transformed rural regions, such as Uch, Nagaur and Sylhet, into flourishing urban centres. In the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq, while in Damascus Shihabu'd-Din Ahmad al-'Umari was told that in Delhi there were two thousand large *khanqahs*.[1] The number may have been exaggerated, but it is clear that by that time *khanqahs* exercised a deep social, political, economic and cultural influence in India.

Sufi disciples gathered round their *Murshids, Shaikhs* or *pirs* to learn the rites, rituals and rules of each order, which were designed to stabilize their emotional and intellectual faculties and to enable them to realize Reality or the direct intuitive recognition of God. Sufi disciples tended to deify their *pirs*, even though the latter were totally disinterested in turning themselves into Godheads. The reliance of sufis on God, particularly in the material sense, attracted both people from economically deprived classes and members of the oppressed élite into orders. *Khanqahs* gave to most people a feeling of hope and a vision of a bright future, both in this world and the one to come.

R.C. Majumdar suggests:

> '. . . the role of both medieval mysticism and sufism in the history of Indian culture is often exaggerated beyond all proportions. Whatever might have been the value of either as a distinctive phase of Hinduism and Islam, from moral, spiritual and philosophical points of view, their historical importance is considerably limited by the fact that the number of Indians directly affected by them, even at their heyday which was shortlived, could not be very large. The number dwindled very appreciably in (the) course of time, and the two orthodox religions showed no visible signs of being seriously affected by this sudden intrusion of radical elements. They pursued their even tenor, resembling the two banks of a river, separated by the stream that flows between them. Attempts were made to build

[1]Shihabu'd-Din al-'Umari, *Masalik ul-Absar Fi Mamalik ul-Amsar*, English translation of information relating to India by Otto Spies. Muslim University Journal, Aligarh, p. 24.

a bridge connecting the two, but ended in failure. Even if there were any temporary bridge, it collapsed in no time.'[1]

This is not the place to discuss the circumstances which may have made, as Majumdar suggests, the so-called temporary bridge collapse, however, two observations should be made. Firstly, the influence of sufism was not short-lived; secondly, members of the orthodox sections of both Hinduism and Islam moved in different spheres, while both sufis and Hindu saints (*bhaktas*) remained unconcerned with the activities pursued by the orthodox.

As we have seen, the Suhrawardis and other dervishes, such as Shaikh 'Aiyub and Sidi Maula, played an important rôle in the power struggles and political upheavals of the ruling classes and the aristocracy. They also amassed large fortunes and tried to pressurize the government into taking a very narrow view of the world. Through the Suhrawardis petitions from the people were presented to rulers and their periodic visits to Delhi were eagerly awaited. Assistance from the withdrawn and ascetic Chishtis who had turned their backs on the world was also sought to avert such calamities as drought and panic, for example, during times of political crises. They offered consolation to the masses and reminded them, as well as members of the ruling classes, through their own advice and example, of the ethical side of Islam.

Until the death of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya', the Chishtis had also refused to play any rôle in the conversion of Hindus to Islam. They believed that contact with the saintly was the only means by which people would renounce evil or adopt Islam. Large numbers of Chishtis continued to follow this policy, but some eminent members of the order, such as Gisu Daraz, unsuccessfully tried to convert Brahmans to Islam. What is noteworthy is that both Chishtis and Suhrawardis only managed to convert high caste Hindus. The theory that the influence of sufism and of Islamic 'egalitarianism' were significant factors which led members of the Hindu lower classes to embrace Islam is unfounded. The Muslim conquests did not unleash forces of liberation or change the position of the exploited castes of Hindus and of the untouchables. The social and economic position of the masses of Muslim converts who accepted Islam under a variety of pressures, all which have been analysed by Ja'far-i Makki, was in fact no better than that of Hindus. Nevertheless, the Chishti *khanqahs* did offer consolation, peace and nourishment to the thousands of Muslims who crowded the towns.

From the time of the Khurasanian, Abu Sa'id, *khanqahs* were rendezvous for artisans and merchants. All *khanqahs* in India followed this Khurasanian tradition for the mutual benefit of both sufis and their visitors. Merchants at this time were continually undertaking hazardous

[1]R.C. Majumdar, ed., *The Delhi Sultanate*, second edition, Bombay, 1967, p. 555. 'Aziz Ahmad also endorses Majumdar's view in *Studies in Islamic culture*, p. 134.

journeys to distant countries, while engaged in risky commercial ventures. Some *khanqahs* operated a type of 'spiritual insurance' scheme in which financial pledges were made by merchants in return for sufi prayers for protection during a journey, instalments being collected *en route*. The chain of *khanqahs* of Shaikh Abu Ishaq from Kazirun to China is one case in point. Naturally the system was one-sided and hardly compares with a modern insurance scheme. If the prayers of a great sufi saint failed, the unfortunate merchants and travellers were killed, and there was no means by which the money advanced could be restored. Nevertheless the network of Chishtiyya, Suhrawardiyya and Firdawsiyya *khanqahs* in India and those of the Kubrawiyya and of other orders in Kashmir, offered greatly needed psychological comfort to merchants and other travellers during this period.

The *'urs* ceremonies and other anniversaries celebrated in *khanqahs* developed into significant cultural institutions and were eagerly awaited by both the poor and affluent alike. Sufism gave birth to a very wide range of mystic symbolism and became an indispensable part of Persian poetry. This poetry was not only an expression of the mystic love of a thirsty soul seeking an intuitive understanding of God, but an avenue for emotions and feelings which would otherwise have never been expressed due to the fury of the orthodox, social inhibitions and political repression. Although this form of poetry gradually tended to degenerate as it became conventionalized and developed grotesque language, erotic obsessions and imitative and repetitive thinking, nevertheless it served to manifest the personal emotions and judgements of individual sufis.

Sufi poetry written in Hindi added a new dimension to Indian mysticism and a new lyrical and colourful way by which to achieve an ecstatic state. The subtle refinement of Hindi music, combined with Persian conventions and artistry, gave fresh meaning and depth to Indian sufi thought. The use of ancient Indian music and language was not chosen with a missionary intent for the recital of the *Chanda'in* in mosques could in no way serve Islamic proselytization. Hindi offered to sufis at that time a spiritual satisfaction they could then share with Hindu *bhaktas*, whose spirits equally thirsted for the higher reaches of Reality. The Hindi sufi poets and the *bhaktas* rebelled against all forms of religious formalism, orthodoxy, falsehood, hypocrisy and stupidity and tried to create a new world in which spiritual bliss was the all-consuming goal. They were unconcerned with the idea of achieving any form of union between the two religions and instead tended to work within their respective religious communities for an understanding of the spiritual and social values of each other.

The Ghazalian tradition in sufism in India did inculcate hostility towards philosophy. The sufi movement tended to promote gullibility and credulity and discourage self-reliance. Most sufi *khanqahs* urged their disciples to pursue hard manual labour in order to crush the lower self, but unlike medieval Christian monasteries they did not invent labour

saving devices, for example in a field like agriculture. The continual flow of *futuh* became a source of degeneration to *khanqahs* and led to the gradual dependence of their inmates on the state, merchants and the nobility.

The most serious threats to the survival of sufism were the presumptuous and preposterous claims of sufi charlatans and impostors. The latter exploited the influence of sufism, and the popular passion for the occult and thaumaturgy, to their own advantage. Their poetry and music promoted immoral practices, the use of drugs and the practice of homosexuality. Such developments shocked genuine and spiritually gifted sufis, however, they faced all challenges with an awareness of the magnitude of these problems, and worked for the eradication of evil from society and a minimization of the hardships experienced by the people through practical wisdom, rather than their mystical intuition.

Sufis in this period also sheltered both the politically and socially persecuted at the risk of their own popularity or reprisals from the government, at the same time helping Muslims to stabilize their emotions.

Appendix A

Female Sufis

In Chapter One we discussed the significant contributions made by Rabi'a bint Isma'il al-Adawiya in the development of early sufism. Women continued to play an important role in the movement both as sufis and as the mothers of leading sufis. Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' used to say:

> 'When the lion emerges from a forest, nobody asks about its sex. The progeny of Adam should adopt piety and obedience to God whether they be men or women.'[1]

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi wrote a separate chapter in the *Akhbaru'l-Akhyar* on women saints. Among those mentioned, the earliest was Bibi Sara, the mother of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Abu'l Mu'id, an important contemporary of Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki.[2] One story involving Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din's mother is as follows. The Shaikh was often asked by people to solve their spiritual and material problems. On one occasion there was a drought in Delhi. Everyone started praying for rain and the Shaikh was asked to do likewise. Taking a thread from a garment worn by his mother he held it in his hand and started praying. Instantly it began to pour.[3]

In Chapter Two we have seen how the sight of the mother of Baba Farid, engrossed in prayers, blinded a thief, and how when the old lady restored his eyesight, the incident resulted in the conversion of the thief's whole family to Islam. Indeed this is one of the rare conversions through early Chishti influence, although the circumstances which prompted it, according to the story, were miraculous.

The background to the death of Baba Farid's mother is also strange. When Baba Farid settled at Ajodhan he asked his brother, Shaikh Najibu'd-Din Mutwakkil, to bring his mother who was then living at either Hansi or Delhi, to Ajodhan to live with him. On their way they rested by the side of a tree in the desert and the Shaikh went to find water. On his return his mother was nowhere to be seen and a desperate search

[1] *AA*, p. 295.
[2] *AA*, p. 46.
[3] *AA*, p. 294.

failed to find any trace of her. The tragedy was related to Baba Farid and the latter appropriately had prayers said and food distributed to the poor for the repose of his mother's soul.

After sometime Shaikh Najibu'd-Din again passed along the same route and near the spot where he had stopped he found some human bones. Presuming them to be those of his mother who had fallen prey to a lion or some other beast, the Shaikh collected them in a bag and took them to Ajodhan. When the bag was opened, to the astonishment of the two brothers, it was empty.[1]

We have also referred to the mother of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya'. Her early fostering of the emerging sanctity of the greatest fourteenth century sufi in India undoubtedly contributed significantly to the later brilliance of her son. To the end of his days, the Shaikh would pray at her tomb during any crisis or period of anxiety.

Baba Farid frequently referred to the piety and sanctity of Bibi Fatima Sam of Delhi. She used to consider the Baba and his brother, Shaikh Najibu'd-Din, as her own brothers. Little else is known about her except that she should say that feeding the hungry and giving water to the thirsty was more meritorious than hundreds and thousands of *namazes* and many days spent in fasting.[2] After her death, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' used to go to her tomb to offer prayers and obtain spiritual satisfaction.

One story related by the Shaikh illustrates the Chishti attitude to manual labour and prayer.

> 'One day the Shaikh visited the tomb of Bibi Sam which was near a pond. A man appeared with a basket filled with *khiyar* (a vegetable resembling a cucumber) and dropped them near the tank where he performed ablutions and then calmly said his prayers. After finishing them he washed the *khiyars* and then recited three blessings for the Prophet Muhammad. The piety of the man so amazed the Shaikh that he offered him a silver *tanka* but this was refused. The Shaikh asked the man how could he, a lowly-paid labourer, refuse to accept *futuh*. The man replied that his father had also sold vegetables, that he had died when he was young and that his mother was able only to teach him the most elementary rules for formal prayers. When she was dying, she pointed to some money hidden in the thatched roof. Some of it was to be used for her burial, she said, the rest, twenty *dirhams*, was the son's share. Like his father he should continue as a vegetable seller and not depend for his living on anything or anyone else.'[3]

[1] *FF*, pp. 136-37.
[2] *AA*, pp. 295-96.
[3] *KM*, pp. 277-78.

Bibi Fatima's tomb was in the old Indraprastha; it was a rendezvous for holy men until either the fourteenth or fifteenth century, but by the end of the sixteenth century it was deserted. The memory of Bibi Fatima fell into obscurity and she became known to the local people only as Bibi Sa'ima or Bibi Sham.[1]

Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Chiragh-i Dihli mentions a female sufi, Bibi Fatima, who constantly fasted. She had a slave girl who worked as a labourer and from these earnings the latter prepared for her lady two cakes of barley each day. These would be placed beside Bibi Fatima's prayer carpet, along with a glass of water, and were the only food she took between fasts. One night Bibi Fatima believed she was dying, so she decided to eat nothing and not lose a moment from prayer. The bread was given to local dervishes. For forty days and nights she remained without sleep or food, and the bread was given to dervishes. On the fortieth day she died. Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din concluded the story by saying that Bibi Fatima's life was a true example of the belief that a real sufi was one who was an *ibnu'l-waqt*,[2] that is, understood the real value of human life through a constant awareness of its transience.[3]

Bibi Auliya', according to Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq, lived at the time of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq, who was a great devotee. She led a saintly and withdrawn life, which involved being in a constant state of near-starvation. Her sons and grandsons apparently also became saints.[4]

We have mentioned here only the most outstanding female sufis amongst those whose lives have been documented. The biographies of a large number of saintly women remain unknown. Some did achieve great spiritual heights, Rabi'a being the most prominent amongst them, and the impact of such women was not inconsiderable. Nevertheless female sufis were generally hampered in a number of ways. As with most other aspects of Islamic society, the rôle of women was considered different to that of men, and religion was no exception. An example of prejudice against women in religion, quoted in Chapter One, is the occasion when a number of men disparagingly said to Rabi'a that there had never been a women prophet. Moreover, female mystics were never incorporated into khanqahs and orders as spiritual succession could not be traced through them. Often they became hermits or lone dervishes and more often than not, lived without the comforts, both spiritual and material, provided by *pirs* and khanqahs.

Therefore, it would not be unfair to say that, Muslim women who became deeply committed to mysticism and a life of asceticism did so in spite of a lack of encouragement and assistance from their male counterparts and from Islam in general.

[1]*AA*, pp. 295-96.

[2]Literally an *ibnu'l-waqt* means a time server or a sycophant, but the sufi meaning is quite different.

[3]*KM*, p. 138.

[4]*AA*, p. 298.

Appendix B

Shaikh Ahmad-i Khattu Maghribi

THE founders of the sufi orders discussed earlier were natives of central Asia, Iran or Iraq. It would seem that the fame of the *Rihla* of Ibn Battuta prompted a sufi from Maghrib, (North-West Africa, a region which included Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Cyrenaica and Tripolitania), to migrate to India.

He was Abu Ishaq Maghribi, a spiritual descendant of Abu Madyan Shu'aib bin al-Husain[1] (1126–98) and a friend of Shaikh Ahmad ar-Rifa'i (*d.* 1182). Abu Ishaq Maghribi was so enamoured with India that he decided to settle permanently at Khattu, near Nagaur, from where he occasionally visited Delhi, Meerut and even Khurasan. Due to his habit of wearing red clothes he became known by the name, '*Lal-Posh*' (wearer of red clothes).[2]

The circumstances which brought Shaikh Ahmad into contact with Baba Ishaq Maghribi are mysterious. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi says that Shaikh Ahmad came from Delhi. The latter was born in 738/1337–38.[3] While a child, Ahmad was playing outside his house when suddenly a dust storm blew him to a place far from his home. Loosing his way after some time he fell into the hands of Baba Ishaq Maghribi in Khattu who gave him shelter and brought him up.[4]

The *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat* gives a more detailed account. It says that on one occasion Baba Ishaq went to Meerut and camped under a mulberry tree outside the town. A rich and childless Brahman, named Mahesh, visited the Shaikh and requested him to pray so that he might father a child. The Shaikh prophesied that if he used his spiritual powers in this way he would have five children, but that the eldest one should be given to him. The Brahman agreed to this condition. The Shaikh left for Khurasan and quite some time later he returned to Delhi. From there

[1]He was born near Seville, moved to Fez and later travelled to Iraq. In Iraq he met Ahmad ar-Rifa'i. After his return to Maghrib, Madyani settled at Bougie (Bijaya). Madyani's disciple, 'Abdu's-Salam ibn Mashish, and the latter's pupil Abu'l-Hasan 'Ali ash-Shazili (1196-1258), the founder of the Shaziliyya order, spread the discipline of the Madyani order in Africa, Syria and Egypt and made an impact even in Iraq. *The Sufi orders in Islam*, pp. 44-9.

[2]Mahmud bin Sa'd bin Sadr Sufi Iraji, *Tuhfatu'l-Majalis*, India Office, *DP*, 977, f. 5a.

[3]*Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, f. 538b.

[4]*AA*, pp. 156-57.

he went to Meerut where he again stayed under the same mulberry tree. Although the tree was without leaves, the Shaikh's presence made it turn green, and this miracle was formed the basis for his immediate fame. The Brahman visited the Shaikh and told him that his blessings had endowed him with five sons. The Shaikh demanded the eldest son, so the Brahman invited him to his house. Deviously the boy was hidden after presenting his four sons to the Shaikh, the Brahman brought in the son of a slave, under the guise of his eldest child. After telling the Brahman that he knew the real child was hiding in the house, the Shaikh called him. The son appeared and after falling at Baba Ishaq's feet left with him for Khattu. However, he died at the age of twenty-five, and although the Shaikh was heart-broken it is recorded that he was offered in a divine message an even worthier child. Meanwhile a strong dust storm carried Shaikh Ahmad from his house and he fell into the hands of a caravan of cotton merchants and was later offered to Baba Ishaq.[1]

The first part of this story is probably mythical but it is quite likely that Shaikh Ahmad was presented to Baba Ishaq by some merchants when he was about four years old.

Baba Ishaq brought up Shaikh Ahmad with great affection.[2] When the child was twelve the Baba took him on a pilgrimage of the tombs of Delhi. There one of Shaikh Ahmad's brothers recognized him. The family urged the Baba to return the boy, but he refused to leave the Baba. At that time the Makhdum Jahaniyan had gone to Delhi. The Sultan and his nobles used to pay their respects to the famous Suhrawardi and great glamour surrounded his personality. The Baba suggested to Shaikh Ahmad that he should become the disciple of the great Shaikh, but Ahmad refused to leave his *pir*.[3]

Shaikh Ahmad was very handsome and endowed with a very beautiful voice. When he was twenty-five, Baba Ishaq made him his *khalifa*[4] and before he died, gave to Shaikh Ahmad the relics of his *pirs*. After Baba Ishaq's death in 776/1374–75 at Khattu, the Shaikh spent forty days in seclusion and prayer, eating only four dates during the whole period.[5]

After this he left for Delhi and began to reside in a corner of the mosque of Khan-i Jahan. At that time Makhdum Jahaniyan also happened to visit Delhi.[6] He called on Ahmad-i Khattu and hugged him, telling him he reminded him of his friend, Baba Ishaq. Sultan Firuz was also devoted to the Shaikh but the latter, to the utter chagrin of the 'ulama' in the Sultan's retinue, paid little attention to his ruler.[7]

[1]*Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, ff. 530a-b, 531a.
[2]*Tuhfatu'l-Majalis*, ff. 4a, 56b-57a.
[3]ibid, ff. 62b-63a.
[4]ibid, ff. 3a, 15a.
[5]ibid, ff. 16a-b.
[6]ibid, ff. 12a-b.
[7]ibid, f. 63a.

After twelve years of hard ascetic exercises[1] the Shaikh went on a *hajj*, returning to Delhi prior to the invasion of Timur. Fifteen days before the invasion, he warned his disciples of the calamity which was likely to befall Delhi. The most prominent amongst them was Shaikh Sadru'd-Din of Meerut, a son-in-law of the Tughluq Shah, Ghiyasu'd-Din. Some sufis escaped to Jaunpur but the Shaikh decided to suffer along with the common people. Seized by the Mughal army he was imprisoned with forty people in a house. Each day the spiritual powers of the Shaikh provided each prisoner with a ration of hot cake allegedly sent from heaven. When Timur heard of the Shaikh, he released him along with the other prisoners in the house. Timur later became his devotee; the Shaikh accompanied him to Samarqand and from there travelled through Khurasan and Mecca before reaching Gujarat.[2]

Meanwhile Gujarat had become an independent Sultanate. It had been founded by Zafar Khan who, in 793/1391 had been made governor of Gujarat by Sultan Muhammad bin Firuz (1390–93). Zafar Khan's son, Tatar Khan, served at court and after the departure of Timur persuaded his father to seize the throne. Zafar Khan refused to undertake such a hazardous venture and is said to have abdicated in favour of his son. Another version of the story is that he was in fact imprisoned by his son. Tatar Khan, who had assumed the title, Nasiru'd-Din Muhammad Shah, in December 1403-January 1404, started an expedition against Delhi but fell ill *en route* and died in February-March 1404. Zafar Khan established the independent Sultanate of Gujarat, adopting Muzaffar Shah as his title.[3]

It would seem that Shaikh Ahmad Khattu reached Naharwala in Gujarat before December 1403 for both his father and son who knew the Shaikh went to see him to persuade him to remain in Gujarat. The Shaikh decided to stay at Sarkhij in Gujarat.[4] Gradually large amounts of *futuh* were given to him. The Shaikh was forced to employ a steward (*baqqal*) to handle the large amounts of *futuh* and its dispersal. According to the *Tuhfatu'l-Majalis*, Shaikh Ahmad's *malfuzat*, once a year, two hundred thousand *tankas* were spent by the *khanqah* in gifts. Some nobles gave such large amounts as 25,000 *tankas*.[5]

After the death of Muzaffar Shah in 814/1411, his grandson who succeeded him, taking Shiha'bu-Din Ahmad Shah Gujarati (1411–41) as his title, was also greatly devoted to Shaikh Ahmad Khattu and regularly called on him. The *Tuhfatu'l-Majalis*, gives most of the credit for the founding of Ahmadabad, near Asawal, on the banks of the river

[1]The number may not be correct as it is used for long ascetic exercises.

[2]*Tuhfatu'l-Majalis*, ff. 6a-b, 8a-b, 18b. The source of the bread remains unknown and the miracle is legendary.

[3]*Tabaqat-i Akbari*, pp. 90-1; *Mir'at-i Sikandari*, pp. 16-18; *Gulshan-i Ibrahimi*, p. 181; *AA*, p. 161.

[4]*Tuhfatu'l-Majalis*, f. 19a.

[5]ibid, ff. 19b-20b.

Sabarmati, to Shaikh Ahmad Khattu, although it also states that the foundation, in 1411 or 1413, was laid by four different people, all called Ahmad. As well as Shaikh Ahmad and Sultan Ahmad, there was a Shaikh Ahmad and a Mulla Ahmad, all associated with the founding of Ahmadabad.[1]

It is mentioned that when the walls of the town were being built up to about six feet high they collapsed. The Sultan consulted the Shaikh who summoned a yogi named Bank Nath. According to him the site had previously been his property and therefore his name should be mentioned somewhere in the town. This was promptly done and the walls were completed.[2]

Sultan Ahmad's successor, Sultan Muhammad Shah (1441–51) was also highly devoted to the Shaikh who died at a ripe old age during the latter's reign on 14 Shawwal 849/13 January 1446.[3] The building of a beautiful mausoleum over the earthly remains of the Shaikh was commenced by Muhammad Shah at Sarkhij and completed in the reign of his successor Qutbu'd-Din Ahmad (1451–59). Even after his death huge amounts of money were spent in the *langar* of the mausoleum for the provision of food for the poor.[4]

In his early life Shaikh Ahmad had practised severe ascetic exercises. He used to say that for twelve years he had travelled alone, bare-footed and without a water pot. At nights he would stay in mosques and never suffered nocturnal pollution. While travelling he always fasted.[5] He observed that the hardships of travelling gave him spiritual tranquillity and peace of mind. Baba Ishaq taught Shaikh Ahmad to be exceedingly generous. Once his *pir* asked him to give four copper coins to a dervish who was a drug addict. Shaikh Ahmad pointed out that the dervish would spend the money on hemp leaves, but Baba Ishaq replied that every one would have to answer for his own actions so whatever the dervish did was of no concern to them.[6]

It would seem that during his stay at Delhi, Shaikh Ahmad became famous as far as Pandwa in Bengal. Once Shaikh Nur Qutb-i 'Alam asked a merchant who visited him if he had seen Shaikh Ahmad at Delhi. Receiving a negative reply, Shaikh Nur said that the merchant's stay at Delhi had been of no benefit to him. The merchant rushed back to Delhi and related to Shaikh Ahmad what Shaikh Nur had said. Shaikh Ahmad replied that Shaikh Nur had never met him and therefore his knowledge must have been miraculous.[7]

[1] *Mir'at-i Sikandari*, p. 25.
[2] *Tuhfatu'l-Majalis*, ff. 51b-52a.
[3] *Ma'ariju'l-Wilayat*, f. 538a; *Tuhfatu'l-Majalis*, ff. 69b-72b.
[4] *AA*, p. 157.
[5] *Tuhfatu'l-Majalis*, f. 17a.
[6] ibid, f. 26a.
[7] ibid, ff. 2b-3a.

The Shaikh ascribed his affluence in Gujarat to the blessings of the Prophet Muhammad. While in Medina the Shaikh dreamt he had attended an assembly held by the Prophet Muhammad. There an attractive girl was brought to him and the Prophet offered her to the Shaikh. He hesitated to accept such a gift, but his *pir* indicated he should do so. The girl was the world personified.[1] At Gujarat Shaikh Ahmad lived like a prince. Large amounts were spent on such occasions as the *'urs* of Baba Ishaq Maghribi, although the money was also spent on charity throughout the year.[2]

Shaikh Ahmad was very fond of *sama'*. While with Tumur's army he succeeded in convincing the 'ulama' of Khurasan that *sama'* was quite legal. He himself composed[3] Hindi *dohas*, which *qawwals* would recite at his *sama'* gatherings.[4]

Shaikh Ahmad, however, showed a high degree of antagonism towards Hindus. Both Hindus and Muslims, who included government servants, would visit the Shaikh's *khanqah*. The Kayasthas, who by this time had adopted Muslim dress, were amongst those who would humbly kiss the threshold of the Shaikh's *khanqah*. However Shaikh Ahmad was unimpressed, and would emerge only to curse the Hindus and bless the Muslims who had gathered to show their respects.[5]

[1] *Tuhfatu'l-Majalis*, ff. 11a-b.

[2] ibid, ff. 33b-34a, 59b-60a.

[3] ibid, ff. 26b-27a.

[4] ibid, ff. 27b-29a.

[5] ibid, ff. 65a-66b; *Musalmanan ra nikbakht farmudand wa kafiran ra halak-Allah Gufta*, f. 65a.

Appendix C

The Sufis of the South Indian Coast and Islands

BEFORE the advent of Islam to India, the Arabs and Iranians who sailed from Yemen and the Persian Gulf controlled the trade between India and China in the East and Egypt, Syria and Rome in the West. The Zamorin of Calicut is believed not only to have patronized Arab merchants, but also to have permitted their activities in proselytization. Consequently many fishermen and their families and the servants of Arab and Iranian merchants lived in Calicut, and at other trading ports and islands off the south coast, embraced the new religion.

The impetus sparked off in commerce due to the establishment of the 'Abbasid Caliphate led to the exploration of islands and new territories in an attempt to find new avenues for trade. In turn, Muslim merchants and the preachers and sufis who accompanied them, introduced Islam to islands and countries quite remote from Iraq. No authentic record of this process exists. Although in the daily practice of Islam, an official preacher or priest is not needed, every Muslim being able to perform his own prayers either singly or in congregation, nevertheless mariners and traders encouraged adventurous preachers and mystics to accompany them. This was due to a number of reasons. Firstly, as experts in religious law and the practical side of theology they acted as Imams in congregational prayers, as peace-makers and as judges in solving disputes involving the *Shari'a*. Secondly, they offered spiritual comfort to boat passengers undertaking voyages which were often hair-raising and dangerous. Thirdly, they were useful as intermediaries between merchants and local authorities whenever the former were involved in political or economic crises.

The veneration accorded to Abu Ishaq Kaziruni by mariners and sea travellers on routes between the Persian Gulf and India and China,[1] gave rise to the establishment of *khanqahs* for Kaziruni sufis at several places along the way. Many sufis of the Kaziruni orders began to travel from India to China to collect money promised by sailors and merchants to the order for the protection believed to have been given to them by Shaikh Abu Ishaq Kaziruni. Gradually *khanqahs* of the Kazirunis were established at other centres throughout the islands.

[1]*See* Chapter One,

Ibn Battuta mentions two Kaziruni *khanqahs*, a large establishment at Calicut and another at Quilon. As previously mentioned, the ruler of Calicut was a Hindu whose Malayalam title was 'Samutiri,' although the Arabs called him 'Samuri' meaning 'Sea King.' The popular word is in the Portuguese form, 'Zamorin.'[1] Ships from China, Sumatra, Ceylon, the Maldives, Yemen and Fars would stop at Calicut and merchants from all parts of the world thronged to the port. Ibn Battuta says that the *Amiru't Tujjar* (Prince of Merchants) and the *Shah-Bandar* (Controller of Ports) was one Ibrahim, who came from Bahrain. Although the merchants stayed with Ibrahim as his guest, money pledged to Shaikh Abu Ishaq Kaziruni was paid to the *khanqah* in Calicut. Its Shaikh was Shihabu'd-Din Kaziruni, and all gifts promised to his order's founder were presented to him.[2] At Quilon (Kawlam) a trans-shipment port for trade with China, Ibn Battuta stayed in the *khanqah* of Shaikh Fakhru'd-Din, a son of Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Kaziruni.[3]

There may well have been other minor Kaziruni *khanqahs* in the islands which Ibn Battuta fails to mention. The chain of Abu Ishaq's *khanqahs* started from Kazirun and ended at Zaytun (Ts'wan-chow-fu), a port in China. Ibn Battuta found a Kaziruni *khanqah* outside the town of Zaytun under the guidance of Burhanu'd-Din Kaziruni and also reported that like Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Kaziruni, he received sums from merchants and travellers for their protection by Shaikh Abu Ishaq.[4] However it appears that khanqahs established by the disciples of Shaikh Abu Ishaq Kaziruni were not only centres for the collection of money and for hostel accommodation to travellers, but also gave the local people in these areas a greater exposure to the ideas of Islam.

At Quqa (Gogo in Kathiawar), Ibn Battuta visited a mosque named after the Prophet Khizr, who also helped travellers on both the sea and on rivers. Kathiawar at that time was ruled by a Hindu Raja called Dunqul who owed nominal allegiance to Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq. In the mosque, Ibn Battuta found a party of Haidari qalandars accompanied by their Shaikhs.[5]

Near Sandapur (Goa) Ibn Battuta stopped at a small island where he met a yogi who was standing in a temple motionless between a pair of idols. He impressed Ibn Battuta with his miraculous powers and his gestures convinced the Moorish traveller that the yogi was in fact really a Muslim.[6] Strangely enough at Canton, in China, Ibn Battuta met an old cave dweller who was reported to have been two hundred years old. He neither ate nor drank but told Ibn Battuta he was the same yogi he

[1]H.A.R. Gibb, *Ibn Battuta, Travels in Asia and Africa*, p. 364.
[2]*Voyages*, tr., [Hindi] S.A.A. Rizvi, *Tughluq kalin Bharat*, I, Aligarh, 1956, p. 285.
[3]ibid, p. 289.
[4]*Ibn Battuta, Travels in Asia and Africa*, p. 288.
[5]*Tughluq kalin Bharat*, I, p. 276.
[6]ibid, p. 277.

had met in the island temple.[1] Local Muslims related strange anecdotes about the yogi. Such legendary personalities seem to have greatly influenced the local islanders who, prior to the impact of Islam, were imbued with animistic beliefs and were greatly attracted to miraculous and supernatural feats.

[1] *Voyage d'Ibn Batoutah*, IV, pp. 275-77.

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